

Maryam Jameelah Series :2.

**"The Maryam Jameelah's Compendium"**  
**Part: 1.**

**Edited By:**

*Dr. Muhammad Ali Junaid.*



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**Karachi University Research Forum**

**جامعہ کراچی دارالتحقیق برائے علم و دانش**

## Editor Note.

Today we see that Very few people in The history are remembered for their Intense Uniqueness, Comprehending of Epistemology and Knowledge relevant to any specific and particular ambit of Discipline, and off course late Madam Mariam Jameelah<sup>1</sup> has been successful in many ways in this Scenario.

whatever she observed, understood and wrote is more novel, unique, and genuine for the understanding of the phenomenon of the Modern Western society, Enlightenment, Renaissance Democracy, Secularism, liberalism and socialism etc discourses compare to the blind and semi-blind followers of western Intellectual, political and Civilization Discourse. Definitely, There is no comparison between our western followers and Maryam, In many ways, because Maryam was not only part of The western civilization and modernity based world before accepting Islam compare to The Native liberals and neoliberals of modern Muslim Diaspora across the globe.

The fact is that she was the native American westernized Jews by her origin and she before Accepting Islam and Eastern Tradition first Tried to understand the genuine understanding of Eastern intellectual Discourse by reading, understanding and in-depth researching long before these So called Modern Muslims who were born in eastern and African lands of their Ancestors. And These Natives Eastern African liberals whose religion by birth was Islam ,but not their sole lives under and unquestionably the atomic difference was present between both of them as we note that these Muslim liberals and Secularists, neither understood their religion well nor they perfectly comprehended modern western human civilization compare to those background holders, who left that materialistic western world by researching and understanding Islam which was the major obstacle in their road to western modern followership .

I confess openly and candidly that I read her writings very late even knowing her name and contribution in defense to Islam a few years back

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<sup>1</sup> مريم جميله.

but couldn't get opportunity to read her writing first handedly .my first introduction to this beloved great lady of recent century of Islam who is the greater defender of the faith, she was introduced to me by the writings of the Expert of Muslim Modernity, a scholar and defender of faith Syed Khalid Jamie<sup>2</sup>, whose Maqalat<sup>3</sup> and collection of writings were edited by me ,but that introduction was just limited to her name and books Name .

The Fact is that I first I read Maryam through the Urdu translation of her selecting writings Edited by Dr.Khalid Amin<sup>4</sup> of the Urdu Department of the University Of Karachi: by the title of: The Intellectual Discourse of Modern Western Civilization<sup>5</sup>, published by qirtas<sup>6</sup>.Karachi-

So I thought to read her original English writings and after reading her few writings, I was really simply impressed by her simple comprehensive interesting English prose style, so after deem thinking I settled my brain to cease my other works and to introduce her writings to My Students Especially and General Audience Generally.

This is the second in line of the Maryam Jameelah series by Kurf: the first one was her short writing about Badee- u -Zaman: Said Nursi<sup>7</sup> of Turkey, in which she penned the life and contribution of that great man of Turkey. This one is the collection and Compendium of her four short comprehensive writings, but believe me to understand the Modernity, Muslim Modernity, Clash of Ideologies, Modern Men and Modern Women, Humanism and Feminism in connection to Islam it is much heavier and voluminous in term of comprehending to the atomic material<sup>8</sup> of western intellectual world.

I accept candidly and openly that I am not an expert in English prose writing compare to liberal authors and modernist, so if You find any flaw and mistake grammatically please pardon me.

Dr.Muhammad Ali Junaid

<sup>2</sup> سید خالد جامعی۔

<sup>3</sup> مقالات: Compendium or collection of writing.

<sup>4</sup> ڈاکٹر خالد امین۔

<sup>5</sup> جدید مغربی تہذیب کے فکری مباحث: مضامین اور انٹریو کے تراجم۔

<sup>6</sup> قرطاس: کراچی۔

<sup>7</sup> بدیع الزماں سعید نورسی: ترکی۔

<sup>8</sup> مادی جوہریت۔

## An Introduction To Maryam Jameelah.

**Maryam Jameelah** was born in 1934 in New York at the height of the Great Depression a fourth-generation American of German Jewish origin.

She was reared in Westchester, one of the most prosperous and populated suburbs of New York and received a thoroughly secular American education at the local public schools. Always an above-average student, she soon became a passionate intellectual and insatiable bibliophile, hardly ever without a book in hand, her readings extending far beyond the requirements of the school curriculum. As she entered adolescence, she became intensely serious-minded, scorning all frivolities, which is very rare for an otherwise attractive young girl. Her main interests were religion, philosophy, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology and biology. The school and local community public libraries and later, the New York Public Library, became "her second home."

After her graduation from secondary school in the summer of 1952, she was admitted to New York University where she studied a general liberal arts program. While at the university, she became severely ill in 1953, grew

steadily worse and had to discontinue college two years later without earning any diploma. She was confined to private and public hospitals for two years (1957-1959) and only after her discharge did she discover her facility for writing. **Allama Muhammad Asad's** two books: -his autobiographical *The Road to Mecca* and *Islam at the Crossroads* ignited her interest in Islam and after correspondence with some prominent Muslims in Muslim lands and making intimate friends with some Muslim converts in New York, she embraced Islam at the Islamic Mission in Brooklyn; New York at the hand of Shaikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal, who then changed her name from Margaret Marcus to Maryam Jameelah.

During extensive correspondence with Muslims throughout the world and reading and making literary contributions to whatever Muslim periodicals were available in English, Maryam Jameelah became acquainted with the writings of **Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi** and so, beginning in December 1960 they exchanged letters regularly. In the spring of 1962, **Maulana Maududi** invited Maryam Jameelah to migrate to Pakistan and live as a member of his family in Lahore. Maryam Jameelah accepted the offer and a year later, married Mohammad Yusuf Khan, a whole-time worker for the **Jama'at-e-Islami** who later became the publisher of all her books. She subsequently became the mother of four children, living with her co-wife and her children in a large extended household of in-laws. Most unusual for a woman after marriage, she continued all her intellectual interests and literary activities; in fact, her most important writings were done during and in between pregnancies. She observes *Purdah/Hijab* strictly.

Her hatred of atheism and materialism in all its varied manifestations-past and present-is intense and in her restless quest for absolute, transcendental ideals, she upholds Islam as the most emotionally arid intellectually satisfying explanation to the Ultimate Truth which alone gives life (and death) meaning, direction, purpose and value.

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# **ISLAM VERSUS AHL AL KITAB PAST AND PRESENT**

## ISLAM VERSUS AHL AL KITAB PAST AND PRESENT

### How can we be certain that Islam is the only infallible Truth?

Islam means submission to the will of God through unquestioning obedience to His Law in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Judaism is named after the tribe of Judah and Christianity after Jesus Christ (peace be upon him). Thus even the names of these faiths illustrate their restrictive character. The name of Islam proves its universality. What a contrast to the views expressed during a recently held interfaith conference in Washington D.C. where Dr. Isaac Franck, Executive Vice-President of the Jewish Community Council of Washington said that Judaism considers itself as valid only for Jews and does not attempt to impose its views upon non-Jews. He declared: *"The validity of non-Jewish the theological beliefs is not subject to our evaluation or judgment."* To me this is conclusive proof that Judaism must be false because an omnipotent God would never restrict His truth to a single people. Truth by its very nature must be universal!

Islam is unique among all other religions in that it alone possesses an authentic scriptures. The Holy Quran informs us that the Jews and Christians have corrupted their scriptures by mixing the original revelation with human interpolations and interpretations until the former could not be distinguished from the latter. Under the devastating impact of "Higher Criticism" very few, if any, Jewish or Christian scholars today accept their Holy Books as infallible Divine revelation. Jews and Christians themselves admit that they do not possess their original Texts but only translations that have been undergoing numerous alterations for many centuries and are still being changed. The Holy Quran exists exactly as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet. It has been preserved in its original text forever. The languages of the former revelations to the Jews and Christians have long been dead. Today nobody can speak those languages and only a few scholars claim to be able to decipher them. Even if these scriptures had been preserved to this day in their original and unadulterated form, nobody could correctly understand them and interpret their injunctions, much less translate them into actual practice. In contrast, the language of the Holy Quran is a living language, spoken and understood by millions throughout the world. Even those who have no time to study Arabic, can easily find others who know it sufficiently to explain the meaning of the Quran. Each of the existing sacred books has been addressed to a particular people and contains commandments which seem to have been intended only for a restricted time and place, while the Holy Quran is explicitly addressed to the whole human race with an eternal code embracing life in its totality. The teachings of Judaism are restricted by their nationalist, racist emphasis while the acceptance of secularism on principle virtually negates Christianity's claim to universality.

Concerning the earlier Prophets and religious teachers, very little of their life histories have come down to us. Thus we know less about Moses (peace be upon him) than Socrates and nothing at all concerning Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) before he began his brief three-year career of preaching.

A cursory Glance through any Hadith collection will give an idea how accurately and carefully the minutest details of the Prophet's life teachings have been recorded. There one finds astonishing details of his features, limbs of body, his gait, the manner of his conversation and speech, his smile, dress, food, sleep, his manner of eating, drinking and relaxing, his love for perfumes, his elegance, catholicity, of his taste, his fondness for riding, his zest for worship, his mode of salutation, his facial expression, his behaviour in joy and sorrow, his wars, his way of offering condolence, his mode of offering prayers and observing fasts, his pilgrimages, his intense devotion to God, his noble feelings and sentiments, his perseverance, his dealings with his fellow beings, his honesty, his hospitality, his deep rooted sympathy for his own kith and kin, his dealings with strangers, with enemies, his hatred for back-biting and vanity, his simplicity, his bravery, his determination, his truthfulness, his adherence to his promises, his forgiveness, his behaviour towards his equals, towards his elders and youngers, his treatment of women, his kindness to mankind and animals, his means of livelihood, his experiences as a traveller, as a warrior, as a law-giver, as a father, as a brother, as a ruler, as a saint, as a pious hermit, as an arbitrator; in fact, all phases and aspects of his life have been carefully recorded. One is amazed at the boldness and courage with which he laid open before the people not only his public but also his private life. who can stand the ordeal of voluntarily offering himself as an object of observation for all the twenty-four hours throughout his life?

Only a person of unusual integrity and honesty, possessing a high degree of self-confidence, self-control and self-determination could do it. It was Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who alone can stand this test. He not only permitted people to peep into the innermost chambers of his sacred life but also exhorted them to broadcast its details to others because even these facets were as divinely illuminated as his public career.

A Muslim is therefore enjoined to follow the Prophet's example in his private life with the same sincerity and faithfulness as he is commanded in respect of the sphere of his public life. Every word that he uttered and every action that he performed are the public trust to be faithfully handed over to humanity from generation to generation as Divinely inspired.\*

Islam alone constitutes a complete, all-embracing, comprehensive way of life where the individual versus his society and material versus the spiritual are balanced into a perfect harmony. The laws of Islam are called the Shariah that provides an infallible Guidance of all aspects of individual and collective life. The Shariah embraces religious ritual, personal character, morals, intimate habits, family relationships, social and economic affairs, administration, rights and duties of citizens, judicial system, laws of war and peace and international relations. These injunctions enable the faithful to distinguish between what is good and evil, what is beneficial and harmful, what is useful or injurious, what are the virtues we must cultivate and encourage and what we must avoid; the sphere of our personal freedom and its limitations and what methods we must adopt to establish a genuine Islamic community. Islam teaches that unaided intellect and personal experience alone are unreliable and defective guides which can never discover sound ethical values. The purpose of ethical endeavour in Islam is to seek the pleasure of God. In Islam, morality is absolute and unchanging because its laws are instituted by God and not by man. The true Muslim does not change with the changing times but forces the times to conform to his standards.

Islam abhors the doctrine of secularism. The Muslim can thrive only in an Islamic environment which is his duty to establish:

Those who imagine that the morality of Islam makes of it a heavy burden for humanity derive this belief from the tribulations undergone by the individual Muslims living in a society which is not governed by Islam. Under such circumstances the morality of Islam

is a heavy burden; it almost crushes the individuals who live with their pure Islam in the polluted society of ignorance... . A specific environment is indispensable for the life of this concept, an environment with its own specific values.... Islam is a realistic system and it therefore supposes that the people who live according to its path will be living in an Islamically governed society. Without this environment, the life of the individual become impossible or at least extremely difficult. Therefore whoever wishes to be a Muslim should know that he cannot devote himself to his practice of Islam except in a Muslim environment dominated by Islam. He is mistaken if he imagines that he can realize his Islam in the midst of a society ignorant of Divine guidance.

Alone among all the religions of the world, Islam created a state dominated by religious and moral motives, thereby demonstrating that political power can and ought to be subordinated to ethical ends and that religion must not be allowed to serve the ends of any political system devoid of moral ideals.

Islam teaches us that one must attain spiritual progress through active participation in normal every day life and for this reason condemns the practice of monasticism, asceticism or celibacy. The doctrines of Islam are characterized by their simplicity, explicitness and highly realistic attitude towards human problems, indulging neither in excessive optimism nor pessimism, and enjoining moderation in all things. Islam is free from incomprehensible theology or burdensome rituals. Religious creeds shrouded in philosophical complexities may give intellectual pleasure to the few but can never inspire ordinary men and women to be steadfast in virtue.

The racism and nationalism of Judaism makes a mockery of its ethical teachings while Christianity's propagation of the doctrine of the Trinity and the vicarious atonement of mankind's sins by Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) nullifies all its moral values. In Islam there are no such loopholes.

The correct course of life for man is to live in complete obedience to God. It is not for man to determine his mode of worship and obedience; it is for God to decide this. God, being his master, has raised from time to time prophets for the guidance of humanity and has revealed His books through them. It is the duty of man to take the code of his life from these sources of divine guidance.

Man is answerable to God for all his actions in life. The time for rendering an account will be in the life-hereafter and not in this world. The short span of worldly life is really an opportunity to prepare for that great test. In this life, all efforts of man should be centred on the object of soliciting the blessings of God in the Hereafter. He, with all his faculties and potentialities, is on trial. There will be an impartial assessment of his conduct in life by a Being Who keeps a complete and correct record, not merely of his movements and actions and their influence on all that is in the world, but also a full record of his innermost ideas, feelings and intentions. : Pp. 38-39 .

According to Islam, God has appointed the human soul as His vicegerent in the universe. The body has been created, with the sole object that the soul should make use of it in the exercise of its authority and the fulfillment of its duties and responsibilities. Hence the body is not a prison house for the Soul but its workshop or factory and if there is any possibility for the growth and development of the soul, it is only through the use of the powers, machines and instruments provided by this work shop. Consequently, this world is a field in which God has sent us to work and do our duty towards Him... The spiritual development which is possible in this world should not take the form of man turning his face away from this workshop and retreating to some uninhabited corner. Rather, the only form it should take is that man should live and work in it and give the best account of himself. It is in the nature of an examination center for him. Every aspect and sphere of life, is as it were, like a question paper in this test; the home, the family, the neighborhood, the society, the market place, the office, the factory, the school, the law

courts, the police station, the parliament, the peace conference and the battlefield, all represent 'question papers' on different subjects which man has been called upon to answer. If he does not take any question paper or leaves most of the answers blank, he is bound to fail in the examination. The only possibility of success would be in

a man's spending his whole time and giving his whole attention to this examination and to attempt as far as possible to answer all the question papers handed over to him.

pp:106-108

Islam is the only religion which preaches a pure and unadulterated monotheism that tolerates no compromises with nationalism, racism, trinitarianism, saint-worship, veneration of images or priesthood. Wholehearted acceptance of the doctrine of Tauhid or the Unity of God makes the believer broadminded and sympathetic to all his fellow beings made by the same Creator, produces an unsurpassed dignity and self respect, makes him indifferent to and independent and fearless of all powers other than those of God, at the same time generating in him humility and modesty. The believer in Tauhid is a righteous man because he is convinced that unless he acts justly, he cannot succeed. The believer does not despair and lose hope regardless of adversity. His faith that God is the Master of all the universe, whose powers and mercy are infinite, gives him immense consolation in trouble so that he never yields to pessimism and despondency. Suicide is unthinkable. The true believer will persevere in his work with patience and implicit trust in God to the end. Faith in Islam fills the believer with unrivalled courage. Since he is convinced that his life and property belong exclusively to God, he is ready to sacrifice them at any moment for His pleasure. Since God alone can bestow life or death no weapon.

no man or animal has the power to inflict any harm upon him unless it be God's will. The true believer believes that God has set his span of life in advance so that all the forces of the world combined are powerless to take away his life a moment before the appointed decree. Belief in Islam blesses the faithful with complete serenity and contentment. The believer knows that wealth belongs to God and He gives to whom He pleases. Power, honour, reputation and authority are all bestowed according to His will and it is man's duty only to strive according to His law. Success or failure depend entirely upon the will of God; if He wills to succeed, no power in the world can prevent Him from doing so and if He does not will it, no power can force Him while atheists and polytheists think that success and failure depend upon their own unaided efforts or the help or opposition of worldly forces. Consequently, they become enslaved to jealousy and frequently resort to sordid practices to try to gain what they want. Thus it can be seen that Islam is not only the sole effective prescription for righteousness but the most potent medicine for mental health as well.

Alone among the religions of the world, Islam made a practical reality of international brotherhood based upon a commonly shared outlook on life, common practices and ideals of conduct. Islam views life as an organic whole not to be shattered into fragments. Islam follows the Muslim in every act of his life-social, political and economic. A Muslim cannot be a Muslim in the mosque and a nationalist or Socialist in politics. He is a Muslim everywhere. Islam is no mere accessory to life but life itself!

Why does not Islam regard the non-Muslim as equal to the Muslim? If Muslims cannot regard Judaism or Christianity on a plane of equality with Islam, the non-Muslim will wonder what kind of treatment Hindus, Buddhists, pagans, agnostics and atheists can expect to receive under Muslim rule.

Islam is a universal faith open to everyone without distinction of race, nationality, cultural or intellectual attainment, social status, age or sex. Because only God can give His faith to whom He will, the Muslim regards every non-Muslim as a potential Muslim. For this reason, he is commanded to be fair and just even to those non-Muslims who are

his confirmed enemies and compassionate to non-Muslims who have never committed any overt, hostile act. Islam commands the Muslim to be kind and just to non-Muslims because if we do not set an example of virtue, how can we expect others to follow us? The conviction that Islam is the only Truth and that all divergent ways are false and evil, does not make the pious Muslim an arrogant fanatic. The Holy Quran forbids spying, backbiting and heretic-hunting. Nobody is compelled to accept Islam under Muslim rule by force. The Muslim always stands before God in the utmost humility.

Indeed you ought to realize that the pious man is he who is good in God's sight in the mansion of eternity and that is something unknown to man, postponed to the End. (Therefore) you ought not to look at anyone without considering that he is superior to you. Thus, if you see a child you say, 'This person has never sinned against God but I have sinned and so he is better than I' and if you see an older person, you say, 'This man was a servant of God before me and is certainly better than I' and if he is a scholar you say, 'This man has been given what I am ignorant of; then how shall I be like him?' and if he is ignorant, you say, 'This man has sinned against God in ignorance so God's case against me is stronger and I do not know what end He will give to me and what end to him,' and if he is an infidel, you say, 'I do not know; perhaps he will become a Muslim and his life will end in doing good and because of his acceptance of Islam, his sins will be forgiven but as for me - God is our refuge perhaps God will lead me astray so that I become an infidel and my life ends in doing evil and then tomorrow he will be among those brought near to God and I shall be among the condemned' . . . So let fear of the End occupy you and keep you from making yourself, despite the doubt about your death, to be above the servants of God most high. Your certitude and faith at present do not exclude the possibility of your changing in the future for God is the disposer of hearts; He guides whom He will and leads astray whom He will .

The opposition of Islam to divergent faiths, philosophies and ideologies not directed towards any hatred of individuals but rather the system that has produced them. It is not persons which Islam opposes but perverted values and evil ways of life which lead only to ruin and disaster, but because all non-Islamic ways are wrong, the leaders who personify these values and are fighting with all sorts of cruel and treacherous means day and night to obliterate the truth of Islam from the world, become hateful and therefore must be bated and opposed with every resource we possess.

Hatred of evil and falsehood is not a sin but the highest virtue. Hate is the natural reaction of love. We cannot love a thing without hating what is the opposite to it and our hatred is in proportion to our love. The purpose of hate is to clear the path of love, to approach near to the beloved ideal and to love it more ardently. War, when fought in the service of truth, justice and virtue is a positive good. Pacifism is tantamount to non-resistance to evil and leads to apathy, indifference and all kinds of moral corruption.

Islam teaches that a common faith is the Only bond which can unite the human race. A man should be judged only on the criterion of whether he is believer or a non-believer and how effectively he implements his faith in his practical daily life. Such distinctions as race, nationality or social status are mere accidents of birth over which the individual has no control. Any discrimination on these grounds is rank injustice. The individual is responsible for what he believes and what he does. He is always at liberty to determine his faith and control his behaviour.

Conflicting ideologies, where the interest of one group cannot be attained except at the expense of its rivals, can never be united or even peacefully co-exist simply by proclaiming the fact that all are human beings. The utter failure of such world organizations as the League of Nations and the United Nations is proof of this fallacy. Universal peace and brotherhood can only be attained when the majority of mankind embrace common ideals. Suppose a husband and wife had nothing in common.

Everything he considered good, she considered evil; whatever he thought was beautiful, she regarded as ugly; everything he thought important, she considered trivial; everything he believed was true, she rejected as false-they would be quarreling continuously and could not live together for a single day! They could not reconcile their differences and save their marriage simply by the assertion that both are human beings. Although it cannot be denied that all human beings possess common qualities, in the ideological battle, the human tie alone is not enough!

On what foundation can a lasting reconciliation between Muslims, Jews and Christians be based? We must realize that under the existing circumstances, no friendship is possible. Jewry and Christendom have joined hands to destroy us and all we cherish. Zionism, freemasonry, Christian missionary activity and Orientalism have combined to annihilate us religiously, culturally and even physically. It would be sheer folly to kiss the hands that are beating us!.

Peaceful relations and mutual respect among us can only be achieved through strength. We must cease indulging in apologetics and present the Islamic message to the world honestly and forthrightly. Before we can hope to succeed with Tabligh on a large scale, we must first convert the nominal Muslims into true believers. We must establish a full-blooded Islamic state where the world will witness our precepts translated into action. Finally, we must crush the conspiracies of Zionism, free-masonry, Orientalism and foreign missions both with the pen and with the sword. We cannot afford peace and reconciliation with the Ahl al Kitab until we can humble them and gain the upper hand .

**Why I Embraced Islam?**

**Maryem Jameelah.**

## How I Discovered The Holy Quran And It's Impact Upon My Life.

My discovery of **Holy Quran** was tortuous and led me through strange by-ways but since the end of the road was supremely worthwhile, I have never regretted my experiences.

As a small child I possessed a keen ear for music and was particularly fond of the classical operas and symphonies considered the high culture in the West. Music was my favorite subject in school in which I always earned the highest grades. By sheer chance, when I was about eleven years old, I happened to hear Arabic music over the radio which so much pleased me that I was determined to hear more. As soon as I heard Arabic music, Western music at once lost of all its appeal for me. I would not leave my parents in peace until my father finally took me to the Syrian section in New York City where I brought a stack of Arabic recordings for my gramophone. The one I liked best was a rendition of the **Surah Maryam** of the **Holy Quran** chanted by Um Kulthum. Then in 1946, I could not foresee what an evil woman she was to become in her later years; I admired her for her beautiful voice which rendered those passages of **Holy Quran** with such intense feeling and devotion. It was by listening to these recordings by the hour that I came to love the sound of Arabic even though I could not understand it. Without this basic appreciation of the Arabic musical idiom, which sounds so utterly strange to the Westerner, I could not possibly have grown to love Tilawat (Recitation). My parents, relatives and neighbors thought Arabic and its music dreadfully weird and so distressing to their ears that whenever I put on my recordings, they demanded that I close all the doors and windows of my room lest they be disturbed! After **I embraced Islam in 1961**, I used to sit enthralled by the hour at the mosque in New York, listening to tape-recordings of Tilawat (Recitation) chanted by the celebrated Egyptian **Qari, Abdul Basit**. But one Fuma Salat, the Imam did not play the tapes. We had a special guest ---- a short, very thin and poorly-dressed black youth who introduced himself to us as a student from Zanzibar; buy when he opened his mouth to recite **Surah ar-Rahman**, I never heard such glorious Tilawat (Recitation) even from **Abdul Basit**! This obscure African adolescent possessed such a voice of gold; surely **Hazrat Bilal** must have sounded much like him!

From the age of ten I had developed a passion for reading all the books about the Arabs I could lay my hands on at school or at the public libraries in my community, especially those dealing with the historical relationship between the Jews and Arabs, but it was not until more than nine years later that it ever occurred to me to satisfy my curiosity about the **Holy Quran**. Gradually, however, as I neared the end of the Arabs who had made Islam great but Islam

offensive because of their apologetic tone and far-fetched and unconvincing attempts to explain away those passages conflicting with modern philosophies or scientific concepts. Their translation of the Text was also weak. Although Maulana Daryabadi's attempts to pattern his translation of the **Holy Quran** on the archaic style of the King James's version of the Bible most annoyed me, I found his commentary excellent, particularly those parts dealing with comparative religion and learned much from it. However, Pickthall's rendition remained my favorite and to this day, I have never found any other English translation that can equal it. The sweep of eloquence, the virility and dignity of the language is unsurpassed in any other translation. Most other translations commit the mistake of using the word "God" but Pickthall retains "**Allah**" throughout. This makes the message of Islam strike the Western reader as more authentic and effective. Throughout the darkest days during my years of hospitalization, I kept a paper-back edition of Pickthall's translation with me as my constant companion which I read over so many times, I must have worn to pieces of half dozen copies. May Allah abundantly reward Pickthall with the choicest blessings for making the knowledge about the **Quran** so easily and cheaply available to England and America! Were it not for him, I would not have been able to know and appreciate it.

After my discharge in 1959, I spent much of my leisure time reading books about **Islam** in the Oriental Division of the New York Public Library. It was there I discovered four bulky volumes of an English translation of Mishkat ul Masabih by Al-Haj Maulana Fazlur Rahman of Calcutta. It was then I learned that a proper and detailed understanding of **Holy Quran** is not possible without some knowledge of the relevant **Hadith**, for how can the Holy Text correctly be interpreted except by the Prophet to whom it was revealed? Those who disbelieve the Hadith also disbelieve the **Quran** for its revelation explicitly tells us that one cannot follow what God wants us to do without an unquestioning acceptance of the authority of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Once I had studied the Mishkat, I began to accept the **Holy Quran** as Divine revelation. What persuaded me that the **Quran** must be from God and not composed by **Muhammad** (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was its satisfying and convincing answers to all the most important questions of life which I could not find elsewhere.

As a child, I was so mortally afraid of death, particularly the thought of my own death, that after nightmare about it, sometimes I would awaken my parents crying in the middle of the night. When I asked them why I had to die and what would happen to me after death, all they could say was that I had to accept the inevitable but that was a long way off and because medical science was constantly advancing, perhaps I would live to be a hundred years old! My parents, the remainder of my family and all our friends contemptuously rejected as superstition any thought of Hereafter, regarding Judgment Day,

reward in Paradise or punishment in Hell as outmoded concepts of by-gone ages. In vain I searched all the verbose chapters of the Old Testament for any clear and unambiguous concept of Hereafter. The prophets, patriarchs and sages of the Bible all receive their rewards or punishments in this world. Typical is the story of Job (Hazrat Ayub). God destroyed all his loved-ones, his possessions and afflicted him with loathsome disease in order to test his faith. Job plaintively laments to God why He should make a righteous man suffer. At the end of the story, God restores all his earthly losses but nothing is even mentioned about any possible consequences in the Hereafter. Although I did find the Hereafter mentioned in the New Testament, compared with that of [Holy Quran](#), it is vague and ambiguous. I found no answer to the question of death in Orthodox Judaism, for the Talmud preaches that even the worst life is better than the best death. My parents' philosophy was that one must avoid contemplating the thought of death and just enjoy as best one can, the pleasures life has to offer at the moment. According to them, the purpose of life is enjoyment and pleasure achieved through self-expression of one's talents, the love of family, the congenial company of friends combined with the comfortable living and indulgence in the variety of amusements that affluent America makes available in such abundance. They deliberately cultivated this superficial approach to life as if it were the guarantee for their continued happiness and good-fortune. Through bitter experience I discovered that self-indulgence leads only to misery and that nothing great or even worthwhile is ever accomplished without struggle through adversity and self-sacrifice. From earliest childhood I have always wanted to accomplish important and significant things. Above all else, before my death I want the assurance that I have not wasted my life in sinful deeds or worthless pursuits. All my life I have been intensely serious-minded. I have always detested the frivolity which is the dominant characteristic of contemporary culture. My father once disturbed me with his unsettling conviction that there is nothing of permanent value and because everything in this modern age continually changes all the time, the best we can do is accept the present trends as inevitable and adjust ourselves to them. I, however, was thirsty to attain something that would endure forever. It was from the [Holy Quran](#) where I learned that this aspiration was possible. No good deed for the sake of seeking the pleasure of God is ever wasted or lost. Even if the person concerned never achieves any worldly recognition, his reward is certain in the Hereafter. Conversely, [Quran](#) tells us that those who are guided by no moral considerations other than expediency or social conformity and crave the freedom to do as they please, no matter how much worldly success and prosperity they attain or how keenly they are able to relish the short span of their earthly life, will be doomed as the losers on Judgment Day. Islam teaches us that in order to devote our exclusive attention to fulfilling our duties to God and to our fellow-beings; we must abandon all vain and useless activities which distract us from this end. These teachings of [Holy Quran](#), made even more explicit by [Hadith](#), were thoroughly compatible with my temperament. When I embraced Islam, my parents, relatives and their friends regarded me almost as

a fanatic, because I could think and talk of nothing else. To them, religion is a purely private concern which at the most perhaps could be cultivated like an amateur hobby among other hobbies. But as soon as I read **Holy Quran**, I knew that Islam was no hobby but life itself!

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**From the onset of my adolescence until my migration to Pakistan at the age of twenty-eight, I was a hopeless misfit. A young girl as serious minded as I was, always with a pile of books at the library, who abhorred the cinema, dancing and “pop” music, who did not enjoy “dating” and mixed parties and who took no interest in romance, glamour, cosmetics, jewelry or fashionable clothes, had to pay the full penalty of social ostracism for being “different.”**

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From a bleak future in America, which had no place for a person like me, I escaped when migrated to Pakistan. Although Pakistan, like every other Muslim country, is being increasingly contaminated by the most noxious dirt from Europe and America, still a sufficient number of Pakistanis remain good Muslims to provide an environment which makes it possible for the individual to lead a life in conformity to what Islam teaches. At times, I must admit, I fail to apply to my own life what Islam demands that we practice, but I never indulge in far-fetched interpretations of **Quran** or **Sunnah** to justify my weaknesses and shortcomings. Whenever I do wrong, I readily admit it and try my best to rectify my mistake. The happiness I have found in my new life is entirely due to the fact that just those qualities of character and temperament, Western society ridicules and scorns, in Islam are most keenly appreciated and esteemed.

## **THE HOLY PROPHET AND HIS IMPACT ON MY LIFE**

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Ever since the days of my early childhood, my life has been dominated by a religious outlook. This does not even exclude my adolescence and early youth when, due to my disillusionment with the established Jewish synagogue and Christian churches, I professed atheism for even then, my life was religious in the sense that I was always in search for the absolute Truth which alone gives human life its meanings, direction and purpose. I was not, however, raised in a religious atmosphere. My family and their friends, having been thoroughly integrated into American life, were Jews only nominally. They were thoroughly decent, respectable, intelligent, broad-minded, cultured people who firmly believed in and observed all the basic moral laws yet they denied that ethical behavior was dependent upon theology; in fact, they could not even understand the relevance between the two. All of them regarded any conception of Divine reward and punishment in life after death as an outmoded superstitious belief of by-gone ages. Any concept of a personal Deity Who

directly intervenes into human affairs and would listen to the supplications of His devotees, Divine revelation and Prophethood was also scorned for the same reasons. As soon as I was repelled by the dominant values of my society, the purpose of which is happiness, pleasure and enjoyment while I longed above all else to achieve something eternally worth while. Since, according to this outlook, there are no answers to the ultimate, one must avoid thinking about them and just enjoy as best one can, the transitory pleasures life has to offer at the moment --- good health, tasty food, comfortable living, the love of family, the companionship of congenial friends and the variety of entertainments and amusements which modern America makes available in such abundance. Never ask oneself, why we were born, who created us, what is the purpose of our life, why we must die and what will happen to us after death, lest one be afflicted with depression, pessimism and despondency. Americans are often praised by outsiders because they are not “static” and love, nay, worship Change. According to these “progressives,” America is synonymous with Progress because it is supposedly the only country unimpeded by “rigid, archaic philosophies, social and religious, and therefore able to nourish creative Change.” I never shared this worship of Change for its own sake. To me, the absence of permanence and stability in anything means the outright denial of its value and makes life frivolous and superficial. My quest was always for absolutes.

Neither Judaism nor Christianity could satisfy me. I was repelled by the narrow, parochial-mindedness of the synagogue and horrified by the atrocities of Zionism against the indigenous Arabs of Palestine. I could never reconcile myself to the complicated, incomprehensible theology of the Christians and the endless compromises of the Church with moral, social, political and economic evils. Both the synagogue and the Church, as I encountered them, were filled with corruption and hypocrisy. In the course of what Jewish training I received, it was but natural for me to be curious about the faith historically most closely akin to Judaism. I found that I could not learn about the Arabs without also learning about Islam and its civilization and as soon as I discovered that it was not the Arabs who had made Islam great but the other way around, I wanted to know as much about this faith as I could. The superiority of the [Quran](#) over the Bible to me lay in its all-embracing universality in contrast to the narrow, rigid nationalism of the Jewish scriptures. As this universality makes for the superior morality, it has exerted a drastic effect on the historical development of these religions and civilizations shaped by them.

In [Islam](#), my quest for absolute values was satisfied. In [Islam](#) I found all that was true, good and beautiful and which gives meaning and direction to human life (and death) while in other religions, the Truth is deformed, distorted, restricted and fragmentary. If anyone chooses to ask me how I came to know this, **I can only reply that my personal life experience was sufficient to convince me.** My adherence to the Islamic faith is thus a calm, cool but very intense conviction. Unlike some other converts, I never saw the Holy Prophet in

my dreams during sleep at night; I never experienced any mystical vision and nothing dramatic at the time of my conversion ever happened. Since I have, I believe, always been a Muslim at heart and by temperament, even before I even knew there was such a thing as Islam, my conversion was mainly a formality, involving no radical change in my heart at all but rather only making official what I had been thinking and yearning for many years.

Soon after I began the study of the **Quran**, I discovered that a proper understanding of it is impossible without some knowledge of the relevant **Hadith**, for who is better qualified to interpret the **Quran** than the man to whom it was revealed? The **Quran** provides us with the general outline of the life ordained by Islam but only the **Hadith** fill in all the necessary details. To those who deny the validity of this only authoritative interpretation of **Quran**:

When the **Prophet's wife, Ayesha**, was asked to describe the mode of his life and conduct, she replied; **"His morals are the Quran."** In other words, his daily life was a true picture of the **Quranic** teachings. He was an embodiment of all the virtues which have been enunciated by the **Quran**. The record of his life which sheds light on his conduct as a child, as a father, as a neighbor, as a merchant, as a preacher, as a persecuted fugitive, as a friend, as a warrior, as an army commander, as a conqueror, as a judge, as a law-giver, as a ruler and above all, as a devotee of Allah, was all an exemplification of the **Book of Allah**.

The sincerity and purity of his pious living was clearly revealed in his daily routine.

The daily routine of his life was extremely rigorous. After the dawn Salat, he received people so as to educate them. He even settled disputes and administered justice, received envoys and dictated dispatches and then the assembly was adjourned. The public function now over, he used to go to one of his wives and do any work she wanted. He even went to the market for shopping. Then another short prayer was performed after which he visited the sick and the poor and called at the houses of his friends and then he went to the mosque for Zuhr Salat. After returning from the mosque, he took his meal, if it was available, and then returned to his private apartment for some rest and then went again to the mosque for the Asr Salat. Afterwards the Holy Prophet would go to his wives and sit with them until children claimed his time. He led the Maghrib Salat and then took his evening meal and then returned to his home for prayers in solitude and rest. He slept for a few hours only and then rose and prayed and meditated and again retired to bed only for a brief time, rising again for the dawn Salat when the day's work began once more. His energy was extraordinary. He seldom complained of fatigue.

Now let us see how this pious life affected the activities of his womenfolk:

Hazrat Ali once asked one of his pupils: Shall I tell you the story of Fatima, the dearest and most loved daughter of Prophet? When the pupil replied in the affirmative, he said: "Fatima used to grind the grain herself which caused calluses on her hands. She carried water for the house in a leather bag which caused scars on her breast. She cleaned the house herself which made her clothes dirty. Once when some war-captives were brought to Medina, I said to her: "Go to the Prophet and request him for a servant to help you in your housework." She went to him but found many people round him. As she was very modest, she could not be bold enough to request the Prophet in the presence of other people. Next day the Prophet came to our house and said: "Fatima, what made you come to me yesterday?" She felt shy and kept quiet. I said: "O Prophet of Allah, Fatima has developed calluses on her hands and breasts on account of grinding grain and carrying water. She is constantly busy in cleaning the house and in other domestic work, causing her clothes to remain dirty. I informed her about the captives and advised her to go to you and request a servant." The Prophet replied: **"Fatima! Fear Allah! Acquire Taqwa (piety) and when you go to bed, recite, Subhanallah 33 times, Alhamdulillah 33 times and Allahu Akbar 34 times. This you will find more helpful than a servant."** Fatima said: "I am content with Allah and His Prophet."

And how did the Prophet's wives spend their time?

Ayesha said: Maymuna was the most pious and most faithful of her kin among all the Prophet's wives. She was seen either engaged in Salat or in domestic duties. When she was doing neither, she was busy cleaning her teeth with the miswaq.

This will not appeal to the advocates of the so-called "Women's Liberation." The immediate reaction of the modern-minded woman to this is dismay. She will certainly ask me how I as a twentieth-century woman, born and reared in modern America could possibly endorse such an apparently poor and limited life? The answer is that to the Holy Prophet, depth of experience was more important than breadth. The fast pace of modern, mechanized living where to be active and "always on the run" are in themselves regarded as supreme virtues, the experiences of modern men and women may be broad and varied, yet their minds remain superficial, fickle and shallow. I would point out to her the fact that many modern American women are unhappy even though they can do virtually anything they please. They enjoy the highest standard of living in history; they are the best-dressed, best-groomed, best-fed, best-housed women anywhere with the least drudgery; they have the most freedom, the greatest variety of interesting social contacts, are unexcelled in the extent of their secular education and have the widest possible opportunity to enrich their self-indulgence and can do whatever they want, yet despite all these material advantages, too many American women are restless, dissatisfied and even neurotic.

For the Holy Prophet, the purpose of life was achievement---not enjoyment. Pleasure and happiness in Islam are but the natural by-products of

emotional satisfaction in one's duties being conscientiously performed for the pleasure of God to gain salvation in the life to come. In the materialistic world, achievement is equated with the capturing of political or economic power, fulfillment in the arts and sciences and acquiring fame, if one is exceptionally gifted, or enjoying an ample income from business and commerce. In Islam, achievement is rated on accomplishing what is enduring and worth while through useful, benevolent and productive work and to refrain from wasting one's time in empty self-gratification disgraced by sinful deeds. The Supreme Achievement is to attain, through implicit obedience to **Quran** and **Sunnah**, eternal salvation in the world to come.

This was the dominant theme of all the teachings of the Holy Prophet as shown in the following oration which he delivered at the mosque in Medina in the first year of the Hijra :

O people! Make provision for yourselves in advance. You should know by Allah everyone of you will indeed faint; then he will leave his cattle without a shepherd. Then his Lord will say to him---while there will be neither any guide at hand nor any shelter to hide him---“Did My Messenger not approach you and deliver My revelation to you? I bestowed wealth and favor upon you. What provision did you make for yourself?” He will certainly look to the right and to the left but he will find nothing to help him. Then he will cast his glance to his front but will see only Hell-fire! So he who is able to save his face from the Fire, though by means only of a bit of date, should certainly do that and he who cannot afford it, then do it by means of a kind word. For the good action will be rewarded and increased from ten to seven hundred times.

And at Tabuk in Syria in 9 A.H. the Holy Prophet proclaimed :

Verily the most veracious discourse is the Book of Allah. The most trustworthy handhold is the word of piety. The best of the religions is the faith of **Ibrahim**. The best of precedents is the precedent of Muhammad. The noblest speech is the invocation of Allah. The finest narratives is this **Quran**; the best affairs is that which has been already firmly resolved upon and the worst thing in religion are innovations. The best of the ways is the path of the prophets. The noblest death is the death of martyrdom. The greatest blindness is going astray after guidance. The best of actions is that which benefits. The best guidance is that which is followed in practice. The worst blindness is the blindness of the heart.

The little but sufficient is better than the abundant but alluring. The worst apology is that which is made at the point of death. The worst regret is that which will be felt on the **Day of Resurrection**.

Thus the **Holy Prophet** has revealed to me personally and to all mankind for all times in all places the purpose of human life and what is important and what is

not. Unlike Hinduism, Buddhism and classical Christianity, the **Holy Prophet** repudiated monasticism and self-mortification as the path to the spiritual life. With his perfect emotional balance, he did not shun the legitimate pleasures of this life. The **Holy Prophet** was endowed with a fine sense of humor and occasionally even joined children in their games but nevertheless he never ceased to emphasize that the interests of this world must always be subordinated by the Believer to that of the next world. He often told his Companions that “If you had seen what I have seen (of the Life Hereafter), you certainly would have laughed little and wept much.”

The prayers and supplications of the **Holy Prophet** prove his unmatched devotion to Allah as the supreme end of life above all worldly considerations. Before going to sleep each night he never failed to plea:

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O Allah! Save me from the pangs of the **Day of Resurrection!**  
 O Allah! In Thy Name do I die and live.

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## **Islam And Modern Men.**

## Islam And Modern Men.

### THE PROSPECTS OF AN ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE

The opponents of those who are striving to build a genuine Islamic society argue with the most arrogant cynicism that Islamic civilization has vanished forever, that its era of creativity is past history and that it has nothing more to contribute to the world. They take supreme delight in relating how one Muslim country after another has succumbed to Western civilization. The various stages of acculturation are described in detail in order to prove that the disintegration of Islamic life and the complete triumph of Westernization are inevitable. It is furthermore asserted that nothing can stop this process. The assumption is that modern civilization is invincible. No propaganda technique in the hands of our enemies has proved so successful in demoralizing the rising generation of Muslim youth than the adoption of these clichés. Despite voluminous propaganda to the contrary, Western civilization is far from invincible. Racial hatred, class conflicts, the epidemic of lawlessness, the perversion of scientific achievements for destructive purpose, the debility of the family, drug and alcohol addiction, universal indulgence in illicit sex and the waste of natural and human resources for luxurious living are some of its most vulnerable weaknesses. What has doomed all other civilization of the present? Our most precious asset over our adversaries is that genuine Islamic life is not contaminated with any of these corruptions. Western civilization only appears invincible because there is no rival. Once effective opposition appears on the scene, the corruption of modern culture will be exposed for all to see.

Most devastating to our cause are those of our writers who escape from a practicable and realistic solution of present day problems by over glorifying the past, entirely overlooking the fact that the most extravagant praise of the achievements of Muslims a thousand years ago, provides no guarantee that the Islamic community will flourish in the future. These well meaning authors write reams in praise of our Holy Prophet and his companions, never tiring of rejoicing in the superiority of the “noble spiritual principles of Islam” coupled with a most vituperative condemnation of the “materialistic West” as if their effusive verbalism would automatically result in a beautiful Islamic utopia without any further effort needed on their part!

As one Muslim writes about this problem:

The Muslims of the world are passing through the most critical period in their history. The western civilization called modernism has dominated over all other civilizations with the forceful hammerings of scientific advancement. Christianity fought against it desperately but it could not stand any longer for it had many vulnerable chinks in its armour. Other religions met the same fate as Christianity. There may still different customs prevailing in different countries but none can deny that they are highly influenced and imbued with modernism, so much so that they are totally changed and have lost their originality. Although the Muslims of all countries are trying hard to ward off the mighty blow dealt by modernism, they are losing ground against it. Even most of the

Muslims themselves have welcomed it and are now gradually being absorbed into this universal civilization.

Superficially at least, the chances for the success of those determined to implement Islamic life on a significant scale would appear to be extremely remote. The recovery of political sovereignty from European rule has not at all weakened the influence of Western culture. On the contrary, under the slogan of “economic development”, the westernization of Asia and Africa continues to progress at an ever-accelerating speed.

The beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the merging of Islamic society into the world-wide society of the present era. To become aware of these implications is in my view the greatest single problem of the Islamic society of our day. The influence of the West has been so great that even when the Islamic peoples regained their political independence they have found that a return to the traditional Islamic way of life was not possible.

If the above quotation is so typical of the mentality of our modern-educated elite, must we Muslims yield to complete pessimism and bow to defeat? If every other civilization has been vanquished by modernism, must we meekly resign ourselves to the same fate? Is there no hope for us?

However bleak the prospect for an Islamic renaissance may appear at present, I still maintain that there yet remains considerable hope for us provided we take the appropriate action in time. This ray of optimism is based on the following assumptions :

1. The fundamental sources of Islam — the Quran and the Sunnah — are uncorrupted and intact. No other religion can claim this advantage.
2. As Islamic teachings are comprehensive, all-embracing in scope and entirely self-sufficient, Islam does not tolerate eclecticism or compromise with any culture in conflict with its principles. Islam alone provides adequate guidance for life in its totality. Not only does Islam tell us what to do but also specifically how to do it. The exant teachings of all other religions are limited, restricted and fragmentary.
3. The determination to preserve and propagate Islam in its original purity has been practically implemented in every period of Islamic history simultaneously in every Muslim country by a long series of Mujaddids. Although with the support and encouragement of Western scholars and politicians, the modernists attempt to force their distorted interpretation of Islam upon the entire community, happily they are encountering stiff resistance on every side from those who are not deceived by this hypocrisy and are determined to preserve an unadulterated Islam intact.
4. From Morocco to Indonesia the overwhelming majority wants Islam and once inspiring leadership is prouded, they will be ready to follow most enthusiastically.

This being the case, why has not Islamic leadership emerged in any Muslim country? We must realize that this is not on account of any intrinsic merit of Western culture, much less inherent inadequacy of Islam. The answer can be found by an insight into the nature of European imperialism. In 1908, Lord Cromer wrote very revealingly in the last chapter of his book, *Modern Egypt*, that England was prepared to grant eventual political freedom to all of her colonial possessions as soon as a generation of intellectuals and politicians, imbued through English education with the ideals of English culture, were ready to take over, but under no circumstances would the British Government tolerate for a single moment an

independent Islamic state. What was true in the case of Egypt is equally applicable to Pakistan and what was British policy was also French, Italian and Dutch policy and remains American and Russian policy to this day. Consequently, our political sovereignty is more nominal than real and the Western powers through economic means are determined to keep it that way.

At this stage it is essential to examine the social structure of the Muslim countries in relation to the issues at stake.

On the top rung of our social and economic ladder we have our modern-educated elite who, although Arab, Indian Malay or African by blood, are carbon duplicates in their mentality of their ex-overlords, zealously determined to make their respective countries as closely as possible resemble the societies in Western lands. Although constituting only a small fraction of the total population, they hold all the power and unless their activities are stopped in time, the perverted moral and cultural values, hitherto limited to the aristocratic elite, will spread and contaminate all classes of the people.

At the bottom of the ladder is the second group which is more than three quarters of the population in all Muslims countries---that is, the simple common folk. This second group includes all of these who by good fortune have remained removed from the impact of modern culture and not received a modern education. Although these Muslims are mostly poor and illiterate people in humble occupations, the ulema and Imams of mosques who have received an exclusively madrassah type education (such as, al-Azhar or Deoband) also belong to this category. Although most of them are good Muslims at heart and some even in practice, because of their naïve ignorance, they are easily deceived and although they are numerous, because they are so weak disorganized, they are powerless. To make matters even worse, many, if not most, in this group observe Islam much more as habit and custom than personal conviction. Because there is no dynamism nor vitality left in the traditional culture they represent, the modern-educated youth cannot help but associate everything “Islamic” with what is old, primitive, backward, poor and dying while every thing “Western” appears to them as bright and beautiful. And to the foreign tourist, this “traditional” culture is but the decaying remnants of the “exotic” Orient. Because no young person can bear to be stigmatized as backward or a reactionary fanatic and yearns to be praised as enlightened,

modern and progressive, as soon as these youth can qualify at the government or Christian missionary higher institutions of learning as businessmen, technicians, doctors, teachers or social workers, to gain prestige and respect they are determined to put an end to all “traditionalism” and spread the “blessings” or modernism to the most remote corners of the land. With the full backing of the Government and the Western powers with their technical assistance programmes and foreign business investments, they are sure to succeed. The most the simple folk can do is offer passive resistance. And even if they themselves do not succumb, their children after imbibing modern education inevitably must.

If the question rested with these two groups alone our cause would indeed be hopeless but thanks to God there is slowly emerging a third group who, although smallest of all numerically, will decisively determine the future of the Muslim community. These are the men and women who, although having been thoroughly exposed to Western culture and received a modern education even to the extent of studying or working abroad in Europe or America, have by the grace and mercy of God maintained their faith and love for Islam,

demonstrating in their daily lives, their zeal and readiness for self-sacrifice to implement their faith. Because this group possesses the necessary intellectual weapons to resist effectively modernist penetration into Islamic life, they alone are qualified for the leadership of the Muslim world.

The prevailing view of contemporary Muslim writers and scholars is that the Christian Church in Europe lost its power and influence between of its irrational dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, Original Sin or the reactionary institution of the priesthood. Since Islam is a simple and straightforward doctrine having no inherent conflict with scientific progress and no priestly hierarchy set apart from the bulk of believers, it is immune to the catastrophe which befell Christendom. This line of reasoning, comforting as it may be, is dangerous wishful thinking. How ever contrary to Islam Christian dogma and institutions have always been, they themselves were not the cause of Christendom's downfall. When the Catholic Church was confronted with the secular humanism of the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation and tidal wave of atheist materialism which followed the French Revolution, all the Church did was resort to purely negative measures.

Thus the Church

welded all the power it could command to conduct a systematic persecution of non-conformists, organized heresy hunts, infamous inquisitions, invoked excommunication and the burning of heretical books. Had the Catholic Church employed its best scholars to refute intellectually with logical and persuasive arguments the fallacy of the materialistic philosophers instead of merely hurling anathemas of heresy and placing their writings on the index of forbidden books, quite probably the Church would have succeeded in retaining its influence undiminished. Unfortunately, instead of appealing to the minds and hearts of its members and thus inspire love for Christianity in the minds of the Christians, these repressive actions incited nothing but hatred and rebellion. Even if, from the point of view of the Church, its heretics deserved what they received, repressive measures alone are not only cruel and inhuman but utterly ineffective, completely defeating their own purpose. Those who want to implement Islam by force and blood shed should take a lesson from the history of Christendom.

Although we Muslims, thank God, have never been guilty to such an intense degree of persecuting those who do not agree with us, still we must be honest with ourselves and confess that some of us have committed in a milder way, the same mistake. Merely cursing Western civilization as "materialistic", "ungodly" and "satanic" (as true as this is) cannot in the slightest counter its growing allurements for our modern educated youth. Hurling vituperatives of heresy at the modernists is not going to stop them. The question at stake is not whether they deserve to be labeled as kafir. Quite probably they do but is this sufficient to accomplish anything constructive for our cause? The answer is an emphatic no ! The final judgment is God's---not ours---and we as believers can rest confident that if we exert ourselves to the utmost for Islam, God will punish as He sees fit.

The crisis the Muslims are facing today is nothing new. Centuries ago we were faced with the same problem with the growing popularity of secular Greek humanism propagated by such Mu'tazilite philosophers as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd all of whom exactly like the modernists today, tried to concoct a new brand of Islam. But by the grace and mercy of God, al-Ghazzali in his *Incoherence of the Philosophers* ripped their fallacies and intellectual dishonesty that the Mu'tazilite movement was halted in its tracks. Ibn Taimiya dealt the rationalists the fatal blow. Henceforth Greek humanism lost all its

influence and never again did the Mutazilite philosophy command any respect in the Muslim world.

What the Muslim world today needs above all is a modern al-Ghazzali and a modern Ibn Taimiya. The task of their successors would not be nearly so complicated as it may seem at first because the secular humanism of ancient Greece does not at all essentially differ from contemporary materialist philosophy. The latter is but a further development of the former.

One of the most important tasks of our modern Ibn Taimiya is to refute the bogey of progress. Our obsession with “change” and “progress” and “moving with the times to meet the challenge of the age” is nothing but a modernist dogma derived from the Darwinian theory of evolution and incorporated into social philosophy as materialist concept of history by Karl Marx. As Muslims we should be concerned only with submission to the will of God through unquestioning obedience to Quran and Sunnah in its plain, literal meaning. Once we attain cultural independence, we do not have anything to fear from a natural and spontaneous social evolution and development within the context of our indigenous Islamic values and ideals. So long as we remain slaves to modernism, however, change means nothing except progressive abandonment of Islamic values in exchange for the Western way of life and this is why under the present circumstances, every change is from the Islamic point of view to our detriment.

There is nothing “new” or “progressive” about modernism. Despite science, technology and economic development, ideologically Western civilization has not changed at all since the Age of Pericles nearly 2,500 years ago.

Ibn Taimiya’s modern successor must also expose the modernist dogma concerning the so-called necessity for complete freedom of inquiry on the part of students and teachers in higher institution of learning as just another bogey. This demand for complete freedom of “rational” and “scientific” inquiry is but another dogma of modernism derived from the philosophy of Socrates as recorded by his pupil, Plato and continuing to this day under the guise of “liberalism”.

Divested of its sophistry, this so-called intellectual freedom is intended for the sole purpose of casting doubt and ridicule on the foundations of faith and mock God, His revelation and the Here after which has found its legal expression in the Soviet Constitution of 1936 guaranteeing to all Russian citizens complete freedom of anti-religious propaganda. Freedom in its true sense must be freedom in every direction yet under the patronage of Western civilization, this so-called “reason” must always be pitted against revelation-never in its favour. Consequently, this so called “rational” and “scientific” inquiry is permitted to proceed in one direction only---the way of materialism. These people never tire of condemning traditional Islamic education for its lack of critical, creative or independent thinking but we are at a complete loss to find any more originality or independence in respect to theirs!

Another favourite technique of the modernists is to pit the “spirit” against the “letter” of Islam as if the two were irreconcilable! The letter of the Shariah, murders its spirit, so say the modernists. Consequently, the late Sayyid Ameer Ali in his well-known book *The Spirit of Islam*, suggests that the literal injunctions of Purdah are most “un-Islamic”, but the Western concept of free mingling and absolute equality of the sexes is the true “spirit” and Islam ; the letter of the Shariah permits polygamy, but only monogamy, and marriage a liberal

Christians understand it, is in true conformity with the “spirit” of the Quran! The plain injunctions of the Quran repeatedly urge Jihad against aggressive unbelievers as the most sacred duty of the Muslims, but Ameer Ali says that the “spirit” of Islam regards all warfare in the name of religion as a horrible sin, preferring peace at any price. The list could be added to indefinitely. The fallacy that the “letter killeth but the spirit giveth life” is a purely Christian idea taken from the Epistles of Saint Paul in the New Testament. Whatever Christian teachings may say, we as Muslims must summon the moral honesty to admit that this concept is totally foreign to Islamic values. Just as no creature can exist without its external shape, so in human society, the organization of institutions is essential because we cannot live as disembodied spirits. If the body of a human being were transformed into that of another creature, it could be human no longer. Similarly, the letter of Islam lives in its spirit and its letter, the two indivisible and inseparable.

Since the rise of modern technology, there has been endless and futile debate within the precincts of every religion as to its compatibility or incompatibility with modern scientific progress. If truth is one, then true faith could never conflict with true knowledge, that is, in its strict and impartial sense. The question arose only because modern science is not morally neutral but has evolved under the direct influence and patronage of materialist philosophy as its most important product and its most powerful weapon. One of the most essential tasks of modern Muslim scholarship is to distinguish genuine, useful and constructive knowledge from pseudo-scientific, materialist theory and speculation.

In my opinion the ideal Mujaddid or Mahdi will be a most modern leader of his age possessing unusually deep insight into all the current branches of knowledge and all the major problems of life. As regards statesmanship, political sagacity, and strategic skill in war, he will take the whole world by surprise and prove himself to be the most modern of the moderns. (p. 41). My view that the ideal Mujaddid will be a most modern leader does not mean that he will shave his beard, dress up in European clothes or live in the Western manner. I only mean to suggest that he will be fully conversant with the arts and sciences of his age, with its conditions and requirements and will use all scientific means and devices invented by it to the best advantage and all this is natural for unless a party captures all the available means of power and makes use of all existing arts and sciences, devices and techniques to propagate its influence, it cannot obtain its objectives and dominance in general. (p.147).

This means that our only alternative is to come to grips with our enemy and fight and that we had better possess some effective weapons to fight with. But here a word of warning. Coming to grips with modernism means fighting modernism---not compromising with it. And while waging our ideological and psychological warfare, we must never forget that once on the grounds of expediency we compromise and begin to resemble our adversaries, we shall have become as bad as they and have no reason to continue the struggle.

The God fearing creed cannot survive under the Godless leadership. Therefore it is incumbent on the God fearing people to establish the God fearing leadership in the world. The Muslims do not want leadership for selfish motives. Their contention with the materialists is not on the point of depriving them merely from the leadership. The Muslims want to regain the leadership on point of principle. The materialists are leading the world

towards Godlessness and open rebellion against their Creator. It is extremely difficult in this environment of Godless culture and civilization that the God fearing theory, aims and principles of life may appeal to the minds and hearts of human beings because the entire trend of modern life is diagonally opposed to it. As opposed to this theory and practice, the Muslims are a group of God fearing people who place their belief in the obedience to Allah. This faith enjoins on the Muslims not only to keep themselves away from the materialist creed of the West but also to show to the world their own God fearing path. This duty cannot be performed by them successfully unless the Muslims take back the leadership of the world from the materialists.

# **Islam AndThe Muslim Woman Today.**

## The Muslim Woman :And Her Role In Society.

Those convinced of the superiority of modern values regard the social position of the Muslim woman as inferior on the basis of Islamic teachings concerning : (1) guardianship in marriage ; (2) polygamy ; (3) divorce ; (4) purdah or the strict segregation of the sexes. Hence a growing reformist movement afoot in all Muslim countries to condemn what has been the foundation of Muslim society since its inception as “un-Islamic” and enforce laws in conformity with those prevailing in non-Muslims lands. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate the inherent superiority of those Islamic teachings pertaining to women and why to tamper with them is mischief-making of the first magnitude.

Much pity is wasted by the exponents of modern feminism on the poor Muslim girl who does not have the opportunity of selecting her own spouse but must accept the husband her parent or guardian choose for her. She is invariably depicted as tyrannized by a domineering father and worthy of no personal rights at all.

An objection is often raised in regard to the Islamic system on the ground that the parents choose a husband for the girl who ought to be allowed to choose for herself. However, in all countries and among all peoples it would be agreed that a young girl who chose a husband of whom her parents disapproved would be courting disaster leading to the ruin of the family. On the other hand, no Muslim parent would ask his daughter to remain with a man whom she disliked. She would be taken home again. In Turkey where the circle of the grown-up girl's male acquaintances has been enlarged so as to include relations of a marriageable degree, the daughter of a friend of mine informed her father that she wished to marry Fulan Bey. Her father said, “All right. But you clearly understand that if you violate one old custom, you break through all old customs which depend on it. If you marry Fulan Bey of whom I do not approve as a husband for you---remember I know something of men and you do not---you cannot come home to me in case of disagreement and divorce for I shall not receive you as I should be bound by law to do if an unhappy marriage had resulted from my choice for you. Take what I can give you with my blessing and go your way.” The girl gave in, deciding to be guided by her father's knowledge and experience. \**Islamic Culture*, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, op. cit, pp. 147-148.

No Islamic institution has been more unfairly maligned than polygamy which is cited as irrefutable proof of the degradation of Muslim womanhood and interpreted as sensual license. At best our modernist reformers depreciate it as appropriate only for “backward” societies and should be tolerated only under the most exceptional circumstances. We must understand that this apologetic interpretation by our modernists has no basis either in the Quran or Hadith, but is entirely the result of mental slavery to the values of Western civilization. The horror with which the Western world regards polygamy is due to an exaggerated individualism which dominates modern society to the extent that adultery is regarded as far less abominable.

There is no doubt about the fact that the strongest argument in favour of a ban on polygamy is that no woman can relish the idea of a permanent rival sharing the bed of her husband. Maryam Jameelah's argument loses much of its weight in the eyes of an ordinary Muslim woman because she happens to be the second wife of her husband. It is well known that it is the first wife and not the second who usually suffers most in a polygamous family. However, polygamy is necessary not only to check immorality and the promiscuous propensities of men but to a very great extent to save innocent women from being thrown to the vultures. A husband who has decided to marry another woman will do so whatever the law. Those who demand a total ban on polygamy consciously or unconsciously want that whoever wants to marry a new wife should turn his first wife out of his house together with all her children. Otherwise they ought to have demanded that not only should polygamy be banned but divorce too should not be allowed in any case and men should be forced to live with their first wives whatever the circumstances. This is what Christianity prescribed before the advent of the modern age. How disastrous that provision proved to be is no secret. ➡

“Anwar Ali Khan Soze, “Polygamy from the Woman's Point of View,” *The Radiance Viewsweekly*, New Delhi, January 8, 1967, pp. 13-14.

It is a matter of shame and regret that the family laws are being mutilated in many Muslim countries so that the Holy Prophet, his Companions and our greatest divines, who nearly all married more than one wife, would be considered as “criminals” under contemporary legislation!

The Islamic laws pertaining to divorce have been almost as harshly condemned as polygamy. The permission granted by the Shariah for a man to divorce his wife in private is cited as another proof of women’s inferior status under Islamic law. “Talaq” or unilateral repudiation is an unpardonable evil, they insist, because it allows a man to divorce his wife arbitrarily for the most trivial and flimsy reasons. Therefore “talaq” should be a punishable crime and only that divorce on such drastic grounds as adultery or incurable insanity should be recognized as valid by the court. While the Shariah provides a decent, honourable and dignified way for an unhappy couple, miserable in each other’s company, to part in peace, our modernist reformers insist that men and women of hopelessly incompatible temperaments be compelled by the law to remain in wedlock. And because no secular law can compel a man and woman to love each other if they do not, if they cannot find gratification together, they will be compelled to seek it elsewhere. The only alternative is to persuade the court, through lies and slander, to grant them a divorce, and create a public scandal, thus both ending as moral wrecks. Because a man who would divorce his wife without good reason would be of bad character, the woman is infinitely better off free to marry again. Yet our modernist reformers strive to enact legislation to compel him to keep her and abuse her more than ever.

Purdah/veil, or the strict segregation of the sexes, has been under no less heavy fire from our modern educated who are insisting upon the abolition of the veil as “un-Islamic” co-educational schools, female franchise, the utmost encouragement for women to seek employment outside the home and their full participation in public life. The acme of the “emancipation of women” is represented by state sponsored parades of unveiled girls in uniform marching through the streets of the capital waving banners and shouting nationalistic slogans, ladies casting their ballots at election time, public “beauty” contests where the seminude candidates are examined by the judges much as prize cattle at a fair or women dressed like men fighting in the army or working on a factory assembly-line. In modern civilization a woman is entitled to honour and respect only to the extent to which she succeeds in performing the functions of a man while at the same time exhibiting her maximum beauty and charm to the public. The result is that the role of the two sexes in contemporary society is thoroughly confused. Islamic teachings cannot tolerate such perverted cultural values. In Islam the role of the woman is not the ballot-box but maintenance of home and family. Her success as a person is judged according to her fidelity to her husband and the rearing of worthy children. A Muslim woman is expected to live in privacy. Purdah is the indispensable means to this end. While men are the actors on the stage of history, the function of the women is to be their helpers concealed from public gaze behind the scenes---a less exciting and more humble role perhaps, but no less essential for the preservation of our way of life.

## **Duties Of The Muslim Mother:**

The primary duty of the Muslim mother is to make every effort to persuade her children to abide by the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. Many are the Muslim women in non-Arab countries who devoutly recite Quran in Arabic each morning without the slightest comprehension of its meaning. Many are the more religiously-inclined girls, especially those who have enjoyed a modern education, who read Quran, Hadith and other Islamic literature as if these were merely some noble, abstract philosophy. Not for a moment would it occur to them to abandon attending dirty films at the cinema, listening to vulgar songs over the radio and singing them automatically or going out to mixed social functions in tight, immodest dress. Muslim mothers should tell their adolescent daughters and sons that just because all their friends at school or college are doing these things, they do not become right. Muslim women must read Quran and Hadith so that its instructions are practically implemented in their everyday lives. Too many Muslim households keep their copy of the Quran wrapped up in a beautiful silken cover on a high shelf merely to gather dust. How these hundreds of thousands of idle Qurans must be making their silent plea: “Oh take me out ! Read me ! OBEY me !

Mothers are accustomed to reading in women’s magazines that they must simply accept the violent rebellion of their young against long-established moral and religious values, their foolish, obnoxious behaviour, their irresistible

attraction for the trivial and frivolity, their utter contempt for all that is "traditional" and their impatience for revolutionary "change" ---that is, atheism and materialism---as an inherent biological fact of modern adolescence and youth and that nothing can be done about it except abjectly resigning oneself to the prevailing trends. This is utterly fallacious. There is nothing inevitable about this, much less are all efforts to resist so absolutely hopeless as current propaganda would have us believe. Our youth are naturally reaching to what they have been taught in their homes, in their schools and colleges and what they read, see and hear in the mass-media. If these taught the Islamic way instead of the Western way, they would feel, think and behave entirely differently. In creating this essential transformation, the woman as the decisive influence upon her growing child can perform a crucial role.

Islamic teachings on Purdah demand that the women lives in privacy and dignity and spend most of her time at home, only going out when compelled by necessity or perhaps occasional visits to relatives or female friends. The best influence a mother can exert on her growing children is to set a good personal example. A mother who is always diligent in her household tasks, caring for, supervising and disciplining her children and who keeps busy with Salat, Quran readings and other virtuous works, provides the most favourable Islamic atmosphere for the young child which will greatly help off-set the multitudes of undesirable influences he will encounter as he grows up. Mothers should start Islamic education for their children at the earliest age. The Hadith tell us of children of the Sahabah who were reciting Quran even before they were weaned ! As soon as a baby begins to speak, he should be taught the Kalimah, and such Islamic expressions as Bismillah, Alhamdulillah, Allahu Akbar, inshallah, mashallah, Salat etc. and as soon as he is able to stand and walk, he should be encouraged to imitate her (as all toddlers love to do) when she is saying her Salat. When children reach the age of seven, mothers should insist that they say their Salat regularly and punish them after the age of ten if they fail to do so.

Thus children should become accustomed to performing their duties to God and to their fellow beings long before puberty. Observance of these duties should be accompanied by a simple and clear explanation of their significance according to the age and intellectual capacity of the child. She should entertain her young children with the thrilling deeds of the great Muslims past and present and try to inspire them with the desire to emulate these virtues. When the child is old enough to read, the mother should make freely available around the house Islamic books and pamphlets appealing to children and encourage him to read them for himself. Older children and adolescents should not only be told not to go to dirty films at the cinema or listen to useless programmes over radio or television but explicitly what is wrong with them. If the mother owns a radio or television set, she should restrict her listening to Tilawat, news bulletins, good poetry recitations and healthy educational programmes. Under no circumstances should she permit "pop" music to be heard in the house because this is the worst possible moral influence on the children. If ever children start singing these vulgar songs they have heard and learned from neighbours' radios and television sets, she should hush them and tell them how ashamed they should feel to be heard singing such dirt !

The Muslim mother must on no account ever consent to sending her children to Christian missionary schools or convents where they are totally alienated from their religious and cultural heritage although she must realize that the Government national schools do not provide a much happier solution. She must supplement this materialist education with instruction in Arabic, Quran and Hadith from private tutors at home if she can afford it or in the mosque if she cannot and with such Islamic training as she herself can give. She should carefully read all her children's textbooks and point out to them that much which is taught to them is not correct and even false and evil and she should explain why it is so in the most convincing manner.

The Muslim mother should try to make her home within her means an attractive place. Most Pakistani homes I have seen here in Lahore, even of middle-class people, are dingy and dirty. Too many Pakistani women I know have the dirty habit of continuously littering the floors of their homes, particularly the courtyards and kitchens, with garbage and rubbish. They would rather live in filth than sweep it up themselves. Islamic education should teach girls cleanliness and orderliness. Women should not feel ashamed to clean and sweep the house themselves. They should not depend upon servants always to do it for them. If she is prosperous, the Muslim housewife must be convinced of the necessity to avoid any ostentation or wasteful spending on the house; expensive unnecessary furnishings like Western-type sofas, dressing tables, and useless knick-knacks should be avoided. Artistic calligraphy from Quran and Hadith hanging on the walls of her rooms should serve a double purpose of decoration and above all, the reminder that this is an Islamic home ! Photographs of family or friends should not be framed or displayed since showing these pictures is contrary to Islamic teachings. An Islamic education should teach girls at least the rudiments of hygiene, first-aid and good nutrition with

instruction on how to prepare tasty “Halal” meals. Many Muslim women are so ignorant of the rules of good nutrition that they do not know how to feed their children adequately even when the proper kinds of foods are easily available and they can afford them.

An illiterate and apathetic woman cannot possibly counteract the anti-Islamic influences which are harming her children day and night. Only an intelligent, educated and enthusiastic Muslim womanhood can prove equal to the tasks which confront her now.

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## Qassim Amin And The Emancipation Of The Muslim Women.

The necessity for the strict segregation of the sexes, the veil, woman's place in the home as faithful wife, her responsibility for the rearing of the children and the management of household affairs, the husband as the head and the provider of the family, his right to divorce his wife in private at his discretion and polygamy --- all these practices our Holy Prophet, his Companions, our Imams, traditionalists, jurists, theologians and ulema of all schools of thought in Islam for more than thirteen centuries unanimously accepted without question as the basis of Muslim society. Not until European imperialism put an end to the independence of the Muslim world did any Muslim ever feel the slightest inclination to revolt against what had always been universally taken for granted as the position of woman in Islam as laid down by the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

The first Muslim in history to wage a campaign against Purdah was Qassim Amin (1865-1908) ---a Kurd by origin, a judge by profession and a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Abduh who spent most of his life in Cairo. During the course of his French education, Christian missionary polemics convinced him that Purdah, polygamy and divorce were responsible for the weakness and degradation of the Muslims. The more his French education argued for the superiority of modern Western culture, the more crushing grew his humiliating sense of inferiority regarding his own.

Perfect civilization is based upon science, he wrote, and since Islamic civilization reached its full development before the true sciences were established, it cannot be taken as the model. Like all civilizations of the past, he argued, Islamic civilization has its defects. He insisted it lacked moral originality and denied that the Muslims, even in the Prophet's day, were any better than other men! The path to perfection, he argued, was science and since Europe was the most advanced in the sciences, it was marching on the path to social perfection. "Europe is ahead of us in every way," he wrote, "and although it is comforting to think that while they are materially superior to us, we are morally better but that is not true. The Europeans are morally more advanced and all classes possess the social virtues. The freedom of women in Europe is not based on custom and feeling but on rational and scientific principles. It is useless to hope to adopt the science of Europe without its morals; the two things are indissolubly connected and we must therefore be prepared for change in every aspect of our life." <sup>1</sup>

These thoughts inspired Qassim Amin in 1901 to write the first book by a Muslim to attack Purdah---- *The New Woman* ---- where he portrayed Muslim home life in the blackest colours:

He wrote:

Man is the absolute master and woman the slave. She is the object of his sensual pleasures, a toy as it were with which he plays whenever and however he pleases. Knowledge is his, ignorance hers. The firmament and the light are his; darkness and the dungeon are hers. His is to command and hers is to blindly obey. His is everything that is and she is an insignificant part of that everything. <sup>2</sup>

Qassim Amin was the first Muslim to prescribe the reform of the Muslim home on Western lines as the panacea for the social problems in the Muslim world.

Look at the Eastern countries! You will find women enslaved to man and man to the ruler. Man is the oppressor in his home, oppressed as soon as he leaves it. Then look at the European countries! The government is based on freedom and respect for personal rights and the status of women has been raised to a high degree of respect and freedom in thought and action. <sup>3</sup>

1. Albert Hourani, *Thought in the Liberal Age*, Oxford University Press, London, 1962, pp. 168-169.

2. -quoted from *Childhood in the Moslem World*, Samuel Zwemer, op. cit., 158.

3. *Arabic Thoughts in the Liberal Age*, Albert Hourani, op. cit., p. 168.

The real cause of the decay of the Muslims, wrote Qassim Amin, is the vanishing of the social virtues as a result of ignorance. This ignorance begins in the family. To improve the position of women, Qassim Amin advocated a modern Western education which would not only enable them to manage the household but also equip them to earn their own living for until a woman could support herself, he argued, she would always be at the mercy of male tyranny. Modern education would put an end to this "tyranny" and stop the veiling and stop the veiling and seclusion of women. Seclusion of women in the home, he argued, is harmful because it is a result of lack of trust. Men do not respect women they shut them up in their homes because they do not regard them as entirely human. Man has stripped woman of her human attributes and confined her to one function only which is that he should enjoy her body. The same contempt, he insisted, underlies the practice of polygamy. No woman would willingly share her husband with another and if a man marries a second wife, it could only be by ignoring the wishes and feelings of the first. Divorce he considered as hateful and if it is to be practised at all, women must have the same rights to it as men. There is no reason why women should not enjoy equal political rights with men but he insisted that they needed a long period of education before they could actively participate in public life.

The New Woman is a glaring illustration of the utter enslavement of the modern Muslim to Christian and humanist ideals. Indeed, as one reads this book, it is difficult to believe that its author was a Muslim and not a Christian missionary.

The polemics of The New Woman against Muslim society are without any foundation in fact. What Qassim Amin did was to blindly accept all the attacks of the Christian missionaries without ever bothering to investigate the true situation of the Muslim woman with an unbiased and open mind. The truth is that even in this decadent age, the average Muslim home radiates warmth, love and fellow-feeling. Family ties in the Muslim world are stronger than elsewhere. In the traditional family setting, the Muslim woman enjoys dignity, honour and respect as wife and mother. She observes Purdah not because of "male tyranny" but because she knows this is in her own best interest. Of course Muslim women endure heavy affliction but this is much more due to the general poverty and deprivation than any social inferiority of the woman as such.

In this blind worship of modern Western civilization, Qassim Amin could not foresee in 1901 how the deminist campaign in the West, a generation later, would lead to an epidemic in the West, a generation later, would lead to an epidemic of crime, lawlessness and universal indulgence in illicit sex as a result of the complete disintegration of home and family.

Western civilization has proved to be very cruel to its womanhood. On the one hand it wants woman to bear the burden of nature single-handed and on the other hand, this civilization calls her out to perform the multifarious duties of a man. Thus she has been placed squarely between two grindstones. Moreover, this same propaganda has enticed women in such a way that they are always trying to make themselves more and more attractive to the opposite sex and thus outrage their decency by means of scanty dress or even nudity. They have been turned into playthings in male hands. Islam has proved to be a real benefactor to woman because it has associated each woman to a single man and absolved her from all other men. Islam has placed a high value on those pursuits which are assigned to her by the dictates of nature. Western civilization, on the other hand, has made her the slave of numerous men and has attached a false notion of disgrace to all tasks truly befitting a woman. Islamic teachings regarding the home and family exactly correspond to and benefit the real womanly nature.<sup>1</sup>

The campaign Qassim Amin waged in his book at the turn of the century against Purdah has, with the full support of Christian missionaries and Western imperialism, borne its luxuriant fruit. As a result of his efforts, in every Muslim land, a whole crop of women has sprung up like weeds, determined to destroy the true role of the Muslim woman and reform her until her way of life becomes indistinguishable from her sisters in the modern West.

1. personal letter to me by Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi, April 1, 1961.

## Islam And The Emancipation Of The Muslim Women.

Today no Muslim country is uncontaminated with a fierce propaganda campaign against Purdah as “reactionary obscurantism” and insisting upon female “emancipation” as essential for the economic and social development of our community.

As Dr. Muhammad Muqqadam, Vice Chancellor of Tehran University was reported to have stated :

“No country can be modernized unless its women gain complete emancipation. He said that in the Orient where modernization had come late, the people were still reluctant to liberate themselves from outdated and traditional modes of thought. ‘Unless we are willing to go along with the rest of the world, we will not survive as living nations,’ he said. The role of women in the developing countries of Asia and Africa, he said, was clear. They must participate in the social, cultural and political life of the country. The evils attendant upon modernization, he insisted, were less than some people were inclined to imagine”.

The symposium held in Lahore on August 1967 on “Female Emancipation in the Two Decades of Pakistan’s Existence,” organized by the Pakistan Council for National Integration was an outstanding example of this same view point.

If we claim to be Muslims and insist that Islam is the foundation of the ideology of our country, is it not our duty to know what our faith teaches us on this subject?

Regarding the notion of female “equality”, verse 34 in Surah an-Nisa tells us that men are in charge of women because God has made the former to excel the latter and because they spend of their property for the support of women. This means that no Muslim woman should be obliged to earn her livelihood unless she possesses no property, has lost her husband through death or divorce and has no other male relative to provide for her. The Quran teaches that the husband is both master and friend to his wife; his duty is to treat her with justice, love and kindness and in turn the wife must be loyal and obedient and owe him her implicit trust unless he happens to be of bad character. The Quran describes the husband to be a degree above the wife not to make him a cruel tyrant but for the preservation of the family. In families where the wife is economically independent, the husband automatically loses his role as head of the household. Consequently, when the mother dominates, the children lose all respect for the father.

Surah an-Nur, verses 30-31, forbid Muslim men to look at strange women or Muslim women at strange men and commands men and women alike to cast their gaze down. Women must wear head veils and draw them over their bosoms and not display their beauty to anyone except their husband and close family relations within the prohibited degrees of marriage. This verse by implication bans painting the face with cosmetics or any kind of dress designed for sex-appeal. The Hadith tell us that when Asma, the sister of Hazrat Ayesha, once appeared wearing transparent clothes, the Holy Prophet rebuked her saying that once a woman reaches puberty, nothing of her should be exposed except her face, and hands. In Surah al-Ahzab, verse 55, Allah admonishes the wives of the Holy Prophet to stay in their homes and forbade Muslim women to go out for pleasure adorned in finery and dress or behave in public in any manner that attracts attention to themselves. They can converse freely only with close family relations within the prohibited degrees of marriage, their husbands, their servants or their slaves. Verse 53 of this same Surah orders the believers to show due respect for the wives of the Prophet by requesting of them from behind a curtain. Verse 59 says that when Muslim women find it necessary to go out, they should wear an outer garment enveloping the entire body so that they may be recognized as virtuous believers and not be molested. The Quran orders the wives of the Holy Prophet, and by implication all Muslim women, when they find it necessary to meet strange men, not to behave in a flirtatious manner as would arouse amorous desire but to utter straight-forward and customary speech. The Hadith forbid Muslim women to be alone with any man not her husband or within the prohibited degrees of marriage, to live alone part from her

1. The Pakistan Times, Lahore, October 19, 1967.

family or to undertake any long journey without escort by her close male relations. If the most authentic Hadith strongly discourage women from participating in the public congregational prayers in the mosque and urge them to perform their devotions in the privacy of their own homes as most pleasing in the sight of Allah, how then can a Muslim tolerate women as secretaries, bank clerks, air hostesses, waitresses in restaurants, models, singers, dancers or actresses over the radio, television and in films? Surah an-Nur, verses 1-24, threatens the most severe penalties both in this world and the Hereafter to those who indulge in any sexual relations outside of marriage. In Islam there is no such thing as a “double-standard” for the Quran and Hadith make no distinction between men and women who indulge in illicit sex and threaten both equally severe punishment. What then, could be more irrefutable evidence of Islam’s support of Purdah than this testimony from the Quran and Sunnah? The restrictions Islamic injunctions place upon the movements of Muslim women are intended solely for their own benefit to prevent and restrain men from taking unfair advantage. Islam is unique among the religions of the world in that it not only condemns immorality but also forbids the believers to engage in any of the social practices leading to it.

The first champions of the movement for women’s “emancipation” were none else than Marx and Engels, the founders of Communism who preached in their Communist Manifesto (1848) that marriage, home and family were nothing but a curse which kept women in perpetual slavery. Therefore they insisted that the woman must be “liberated” from domestic servitude and achieve full economic independence through whole-time employment in industry. The subsequent champions of feminism insisted that women must be granted as much freedom to indulge in illicit sex as the men through co-education, employment outside the home alongside men, mixed social functions and courtship before marriage in semi-nude fashions, mixed social functions which include drinking, drug taking and dancing with contraceptives, sterilization and abortion to prevent unwanted pregnancies and state controlled nurseries and public boarding schools assuming the responsibility for the rearing of the children, many of whom would be illegitimate. This is in essence what the modern concept of “women’s rights” amounts to.

The Vice-Chancellor of Tehran University tries to assure his audience at the Gulberg School of Home-Economics in Lahore that the evils attendant upon modernization were less than some over-anxious conservatives and reactionaries were inclined to imagine. But are these fears really unfounded? Let us look at the result of “female emancipation” in the West.

“We are living in a Babylonian society,” says American historian and columnist, Max Lerner. “The emphasis is on the senses and the release of sexuality. All the old codes have been broken down” Until recently, the Church, the Government, the family and the community have dictated what can and cannot be expressed in public. However, now these institutions have been over-run by the demands of a mass society that demands to see and hear everything. Across the United States of America, audiences pack art houses and neighbourhood theatres to watch the multiple orgasms of a seldom-clothed young Swedish actress in *I, a Woman*. Italian director, Michelangelo Antonioni breaks the taboo against head-on, total nudity in *Blow-up*. In *Barbarella*, a film built around the endless seductions of a French comic-strip heroine, Jane Fonda hops from one nude scene to the next in celebration of the erotic life. *Portrait of Jason*, a remarkable voyage into the twisted soul of a black, male prostitute, compresses in less than two hours all the raw language and candid corners of life that today find free expression in almost every independent American film.

The Jesuit theologian, Father Walter J. Ong, says:

“We are going to have to live with a degree of freedom much greater than anything we’ve known in the past”<sup>1</sup>

And what has been the effect of this decadence upon the Muslim countries? One of the most potent sources of both female “emancipation” and moral corruption is the cinema industry:

Every girl in Hira-Mandi (the red-light district in Lahore) has histrionic ambitions. All of them want to become movie queens. Towards the realization of this ambition, they are prepared to offer any sacrifice. A large number of them end up having arrived nowhere after having allowed themselves to be subjected to the lust of the so-called producers and directors. The easiest and most commonly exploited women in the movie game are these. Most of them never go beyond itsy-bitsy walk-on parts. A large number of extra girls in the films come from this source. A few, of course, have risen high. Most of the city’s hotels are used for purposes of a “good time”. Some hotel waiters act as procurers. Many of the restaurants are used as places of assignation. These women can be found at the city’s bus-stops. The city’s cinema houses are also well-known hunting-grounds. Cinema boxes are not infrequently used for purposes other than watching

1. “Our Anything Goes Society-Where is it Going?” *Readers Digest*, April 1968.

a movie. Police surveillance of these activities is lax.<sup>1</sup>

Is producing an army of women like Christine Keeler or Marilyn Monroe part of our “national development programme”?

The propaganda campaign for female emancipation waged by the press, radio and cinema belittles the role of woman as wife and mother and describes those who stay in their homes raising their children as an unpardonable economic loss of half of the nation’s man-power! The rapid spread of co-education in Muslim lands, officially encouraged, which has spawned the pernicious growth of the promiscuous intermingling of the sexes has been responsible for many social evils as well as ruining the young lives of countless individuals concerned. Co-education is based on the fallacy that there is no inherent distinction between the sexes and that both men and women should be trained to work at identical tasks in full-time careers outside the home. Consequently, girls who attend co-educational schools receive the worst possible preparation for marriage and motherhood. Yet this same propaganda insists that the emancipated woman’s primary duty is still her home ! In other words, this means that the modern woman must bear a double burden! In addition to earning her own living in full-time employment outside the home, she must at the same time somehow perform the near-impossible task of fulfilling all her obligations to her husband and children and keep a spotless house single-handed ! Is this justice?

Have the new family laws enacted in most Muslim countries to conform with the legal codes of the West, really improved the position of our women? This kind of legislation is very carefully indeed to specify a minimum age for marriage but conveniently forgets to place any similar restrictions upon illicit affairs between young boys and girls who are prohibited to marry under these laws. In most Muslim countries, in contradiction to the whole spirit of Quran and Sunnah, polygamy is being more and more restricted and even forbidden by the modernists who never bother to pose the question whether it is better for a woman to share her husband’s love with another woman who is also his legitimate wife and maintain her right to remain under the protection of his roof where her children can receive the love and care of a father or would she rather see her husband forced into clandestine illicit affairs because the law of the land prohibits him from marrying again until he divorces her first and throws her and her children out? Is it not far better for the woman who is not getting on well with her husband to be divorced by him in private so that the unhappy couple can part in peace, each free to marry again, or should the case be decided by a Court and the husband, to be rid of the marriage tie, be compelled to falsely charge his wife with immoral conduct or insanity in order to convince the third party of the “necessity” for the divorce, resulting in public scandal and the poor woman’s reputation ruined for life?

Actually the champions of female “emancipation” are not at all interested in the personal happiness and welfare of the women concerned. At the Lahore symposium, one of the speakers, Mrs. Satnam Mahmud, herself an ardent supporter of the All Pakistan Women’s Association, frankly admitted that though Western women are blessed with material plenty and complete social freedom and equality, they are not necessarily happy. If peace of mind is the aim, she confessed, then the path of the so called emancipation may not be the answer. Begun Kaisera Anwar Ali, a seasoned social worker and pillar of A.P.W.A., expressed bitter disappointment in those highly-educated women ignorant of their own religious and cultural background and national languages, apparently overlooking the fact that the activities of her organization are in every way supporting and encouraging these unfortunate developments.

The movement for “female emancipation” should be recognized by all Muslims for what is – a malignant conspiracy to destroy the home and family and eventually wreck our entire society. The cheap slogans of “women’s rights,” “emancipation” and “progress” only serve as a smoke screen to obscure its real intentions. The movements for female emancipation in the Muslim world cannot but lead to the same catastrophe that has already happened elsewhere universal indulgence in illicit affairs with the sexual behaviour of the humans involved so degraded as would shock the wild beasts of the jungle and as an inevitable result of the destruction of home and family and indeed, the whole moral and social framework, an epidemic of juvenile delinquency, crime and an atmosphere saturated with violence, unrest and lawlessness. The history of the civilizations of the past is sufficient proof that when vice and immorality run rampant, no society can long survive.

1. “Focus on Prostitution in Lahore,” *The Pakistan Times*, March 29- 30, 1968.

## The Feminist Movement And The Muslim Women.

The most radical movement in recent times which is revolutionizing the whole social structure and changing the entire basis of human relationships is the Feminist movement, popularly known as the drive for Women's Liberation.

The Feminist movement is not a unique product of the modern age. Its historical precedents reach back into antiquity. In his Republic, Plato advocated the abolition of the family and social roles determined by sex; in literature, the ancient Greek classical comedy, *Lysistrata* and much more recently, Henrick Ibsen's (1828-1906) drama, A Doll's House preached feminist ideals. The Victorian economist and philosopher, John Stuart Mill and the German socialist, Friedrich Engels in his essay, The Subjection of Women, which he wrote in 1869, laid the theoretical foundations of Feminism. In 1884 Engels publically proclaimed marriage as a "dreary mutation of slavery", urged its abolition and suggested public responsibility for the rearing of children.

In America, Feminism was the outgrowth of the movement for the abolition of slavery and the Temperance movement for the legal banning of liquor. Women who joined these organizations soon discovered that to make their cause effective, they required political power. The historical milestone of the Feminist movement was the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 which in its manifesto, demanded women's rights to her complete control over her property and earnings, the right to divorce her husband, guardianship of the children and an end to sexual discrimination in employment along with the right to receive equal pay with men for the same work, and most important, female franchise. As the campaign for women's suffrage grew, the more conservative Feminists limited their cause to the single issue of suffrage. In 1920 with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the American Constitution giving women the vote, the majority of women activist as well as the public assumed that with female franchise, women's rights had been fully obtained. After this, the Feminist movement lay dormant for more than forty years.

On December 14, 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed an Executive order establishing the President's Commission on the status of women. Its mandate was "to examine and recommend remedies to combat the prejudices and obsolete customs and mores which act as obstacles to the complete realization of women's rights." The President's Commission was the first official body ever to examine the status of women in the United States.

Thus the "silent fifties" came to an abrupt end with the beginnings of Feminist confrontation politics in the early 1960's ---marches, pickets and sit-ins. College and university girls began to participate in these political activities.

In contrast to the women who assembled at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 and merely protested against the ill-treatment and abuse of women by drunken husbands and achievement of their legitimate rights in marriage, control of property and earnings and equal pay with men for the same work, the demands of their modern successors are far more radical. In the largest and most enthusiastic Feminist demonstration ever held, on August 26, 1970, hundreds of women marched down Fifth Avenue, New York City, carrying placards which read :

HOUSEWIVES ARE UNPAID SLAVES !  
STATE PAY FOR HOUSEWORK ! OPPRESSED WOMEN! DON'T COOK DINNER! STARVE YOUR HUSBAND TONIGHT! END  
HUMAN SACRIFICE! DON'T GET MARRIED! WASHING DIAPERS IS NOT FULFILLING ! LEGALIZE ABORTION ! DEPENDENCY  
IS NOT A HEALTHY STATE OF BEING!

Today's Faminists are implacably opposed to any social roles being determined by sex. Feminists assert the absolute and unqualified equality of men and women, notwithstanding anatomical differences. They deny that there is any inherent biological distinction between men and women on the basis of sex which determines that the wife should be the housewife and mother and the husband the breadwinner and authoritarian head of the family. They believe that women should take just as active role in sexual intercourse as men and not be passive. They demand the abolition of the institution of marriage, home and family, assert complete female sexual freedom and that the upbringing of children should be a public responsibility. They insist that all women be given the right to complete control over their reproductive lives. They are demanding that all restrictions must be lifted from the laws governing contraception so that

devices can be publically advertised and available over the druggist counter to any woman regardless of her age or marital status and purchasable without a doctor's prescription. All laws restricting abortion should be removed and that women have a legal right to abortion at any stage of pregnancy. Abortions should not only be available on demand but should be supplied free by the state to any woman who wants one so that the poor can take full advantage of this facility. In schools, all courses must be equally co-educational ---home-economics must not be exclusively female and shop mechanics for boys. Segregation must be broken down in gymnasiums and physical education. Girls should be allowed to compete in all sports and physical exercises with boys at all ages. All mass-media must be radically changed to eliminate sex-stereotyping roles and portray women as equal to men in all fields of work and production. Children's books are criticized by feminists because they do not show in their stories more single-parent families, unmarried mothers and divorced women as models for the children. Girls should be given mechanical toys to play with and boys should be given dolls. Instead of the traditional institutions of marriage, home and family, radical Feminists propose men and women living in large communes where the welfare and rearing of the children would be a public responsibility. They are demanding that child-care centres are made available to parents on a 24-hour basis provided to the public as free on demand just as parks, libraries and recreational facilities are taken for granted in most American communities. Women must be financially independent and no profession or occupation should be barred to her on account of her sex.

A lot of women who may say that they just want to play the traditional roles are simply fearful—or unable to imagine other ways of being. Old roles can seem to offer a certain security. Freedom can seem frightening especially if one has learned how to achieve a certain degree of power inside prison. Perhaps they are just afraid of choices. We don't seek to impose anything on women but merely to open up all possible alternatives. We do seek choice as one of the functions which makes people human beings. We want to be full people, crippled neither by law or custom or our own chained minds. If there is no room in that in nature, then nature must be changed. <sup>1</sup>

One of the "alternative choices" for women the Feminists seek to make socially acceptable is Lesbianism (female homosexuality). One of the branches of feminism is the homophile organization known as The Daughters of Bilitis the aim of which is to promote lesbianism.

The women's liberation movement has members who were lesbians before its existence and those who have become lesbians since their involvement with the movement. For some of the latter, Lesbianism is a form of political protest. Say the radical feminists. "Lesbianism is one road to freedom—freedom from oppression by men."<sup>2</sup>

The Lesbian minority in America, which may run as high as ten million women, is a woman, who is drawn erotically to women rather than to men. Perhaps the most logical and least hysterical of all statements about homosexuality is the following by Dr. Joel Fort, psychiatrist and public health specialist and Dr. Joe K. Adams, psychologist and former mental health officer.

The statement made in August 1966 is as follows :

"Homosexuals like heterosexuals should be treated as individual human beings and not as a special group either by law or social agencies or employers. Laws governing sexual behaviour should be reformed to deal only with clearly anti-social behaviour involving violence or youth. The sexual behaviour of individual adults by mutual consent in private should not be a matter of public concern."<sup>3</sup>

What is the end-result of the radical feminist movement? What kind of society does Women's Lib. Seek to attain?

Thus women for men are alternatively angels and slaves to be worshipped one minute and spurned and exploited the next but seldom treated as equals. Concerning sex, our society has taught total abstinence for the first decade of sexual maturity (even masturbation is considered at best an unavoidable evil,) then life-long fidelity to one partner. All the while society does its best both to keep us ignorant and confused about what a well-developed sex-life can be and to convince us that the forbidden fruits of promiscuity surpass anything the "moral" person can ever taste. What a bundle of paradoxes ! If instead we could face without flinching our homosexual impulses and curiosity about how this or that act with such a person might feel, then we might be able to distinguish between an impulse which is immoral and

1 · Judith Hole and Ellen Levine, *The Rebirth of Feminism*, The New York Times, New York, 1971, pp. 228.

2 · Ibid., p. 240.

3 · Joanne Cooke and Charlotte edited *The New Woman : A Motive Anthology on Women's Liberation*, Bunch-Weeks, Bobbs-Merill, New York, 1970. pp. 79-81.

involuntary and action which of course must be taken deliberately in accordance with its likely consequences and our overall values and goals. What would happen if men rejected the male stereotype and acknowledge the values of oneness, humility, discussion, consideration, cooperation and compromise along with humility, respectful disagreement and conflict. We would not deny the richness of our sexual imagination nor the natural sexual element in all relationships. Just how it occurs—talking, touching, dancing or making love should be our guilt-free choice based on our own honest needs rather than a “moral” “masculine” stereotype.

What about the question of “fidelity” to one partner versus a diverse sex-life? Most adults seem to need to have a primary relationship which comes before all others. If a problem in the primary relationship, which is the most demanding but also the most potentially rewarding kind, makes us try to escape through an outside flirtation or “affair,” this is bad not because of the sexual acts committed but because it is an escape. The problem remains unsolved.

All our relationships tend to be over-reserved. We need to loosen up and learn to express affection openly and physically. Would men’s and women’s liberation of the sort I have just described destroy the traditional American family? I think so. It is an institution with many drawbacks. Considerations of efficiency and economy and exposure to the difficulties and opportunities inherent in larger groups living and working together make it a good idea to experiment with some “communal” kinds of arrangement.<sup>1</sup>

In Muslim countries, fortunately, the Feminist movement has not yet touched such extremes as this but as a result of westernization, Purdah is rapidly disappearing and women, revolting against their traditional roles, are patterning their lives more and more on the models of their Western sisters.

In the more fashionable and well-to-do urban classes, particularly in Tehran, the women spend less time in household work and more in social, professional, recreational and philanthropic activities. To go to the dress-maker or the hair-dresser, to have morning coffee or lunch with friends, to shop and attend parties, these constitute the daily routine for such women. They also enjoy taking meals in fine restaurants, going on holidays and engaging in sports. An increasing number of women of this class take an interest in cultural and charitable work.<sup>2</sup>

In the cities of Lebanon, women are increasingly seen outside the home. On Sundays there are as many women as men on the crowded beaches of Beirut—the younger generation, ofcourse. Beach behaviour undoubtedly is a symbol of the loosening of bonds. In Lebanon the acceptance of Western dress styles has reached a stage where among the westernized middle and upper classes, there is little restraint even on those girls who wish to dress provocatively. In all social groups girls display a tremendous preoccupation with clothes and they are not usually casual clothes except for beach wear of picnics. In the winter suits are worn but in summer the standard garb for the university girl is a tight silk dress or skirt and a more or less transparent blouse. High heels and nylon stockings are standard and make-up is elaborate. Some Muslim girls (not university students) wear a completely transparent symbolic veil over their faces. A few years ago, girls were shy about being seen on the beaches with bathing suits, especially in a bikini. Now they take it in their stride and many wear scanty two-piece bathing suits.<sup>3</sup>

Feminism is an unnatural, artificial and abnormal product of contemporary social disintegration which in turn is the inevitable result of the rejection of all transcendental, absolute moral and spiritual values. The student of anthropology and history can be certain of the abnormality of the Feminist movement because all human cultures that we know of throughout prehistoric and historic times make a definite, clear-cut distinction between “masculinity” and “femininity” and pattern the social roles of men and women accordingly. The disintegration of the home and family, the loss of the authoritarian of the home and family, the loss of the authoritarian role of the father and sexual promiscuity have been directly responsible for the decline and fall of every nation in which these evils became prevalent.

Some may argue that if this is so, why is Western civilization so extraordinarily vigorous and dynamic and despite its decadence and moral corruption, still unchallenged in its world-domination?

When moral depravity, self-worship and sensual indulgence have touched extremes; when men and women, young and old have become lost in sexual craze; when men have been completely perverted by sexual excitements, the natural

1. Ibid, pp. 122-125.

2. PP: 77 ·

3. Raphael Patai, edited *Women in the Modern World*, pp. 122-123 · The Free Press, New York, 1967.

consequences leading a nation to total collapse will inevitably follow. People who witness the progress and prosperity of such declining nations, which indeed stand on the very brink of an abyss of fire, are led to conclude that their self-indulgence is not impeding their progress but accelerating it. They think that nation is at the peak of its prosperity when its people are highly self-indulgent. But this is a sad conclusion. When the constructive and destructive aspect on the whole seems to have an edge over the destructive aspect, it is wrong to count the latter among the factors leading to the former.

Take, for instance, the case of a clever merchant who is earning high profits by dint of his intelligence, hard-work and experience. But at the same time, if he is given to drink, gambling and leads a care-free life, will it not be misleading to regard that side of his life as contributing to his well-being and prosperity? As a matter of fact, the first set of qualities is helping him to prosper whereas the second set is pulling him down. If on account of the positive qualities, he is flourishing, it does not mean that the negative forces are ineffective. It may be that the devil of gambling brings his whole fortune to naught in a moment and it may be that the devil of drinking leads him to commit a fatal mistake rendering him bankrupt and it may be that the devil of sexual indulgence leads him to commit murder, suicide or some other calamity. One cannot imagine how prosperous and triumphant he would have been had he not fallen a prey to these evils. Similarly is the case with a nation. In the beginning it receives an impetus from constructive forces but then, due to lack of proper guidance, it begins together round it the means of its own destruction. For a while the constructive forces drag it along under the momentum already gained. But the destructive forces that are working simultaneously weaken it so much that one stray shock can send it sprawling to its doom. <sup>1</sup>

#### Where can salvation for humanity be found?

“From the point of view of social structure, the teachings of the Shariah emphasize the role of the family as the unit of society—the family in the extended sense and not in its atomized, nuclear modern form. The greatest social achievement of the Prophet in Medina was precisely in breaking the existing tribal bonds and substituting religious ones which were connected on the one hand with the totality of the Muslim community and on the other hand with the family. The Muslim family is the miniature of the whole of Muslim society and its firm basis. In it, the man or father functions as the Imam in accordance with the patriarchal nature of Islam. The religious responsibility of the family rests upon his shoulders. In the family, the father upholds the tenets of the faith and his authority symbolizes that of God in the world. The man is in fact respected in the family precisely because of the sacerdotal function that he fulfils. The rebellion of Muslim women in certain quarters of Islamic society came when men themselves ceased to fulfil their religious function and lost their virile and patriarchal character. By becoming themselves effeminate, they caused the reaction of revolt among certain women who no longer felt the authority of religion upon themselves.

“The traditional family is also the unit of stability of society and the four wives that a Muslim can marry, like the four-sided Ka’aba, symbolize this stability. Many have not understood why such a family structure is permitted in Islam and stack Islam for it as if polygamy belongs to Islam alone. Here and again Muslim modernism carries with it the prejudice of Christianity against polygamy to the extent that some have gone even so far as to call it immoral and prefer promiscuity to a social pattern which minimizes all illicit relations to the extent possible. The problem of the attitude of the Western observer is not as important as that segment of modernized Muslim society which itself cannot understand the teachings of the Shariah on this point simply because it uses as criteria categories borrowed from the modern West.

“There is no doubt that in a small but significant segment of Muslim society today, there is a revolt of women against traditional Islamic society. In every civilization a reaction always comes against an existing force or action. In Islam, the very patriarchal and masculine nature of the tradition makes the revolt of those women who have become aggressively modernized more violent and virulent than, let us say, in Hinduism, where the maternal element has always been strong. What many modernized Muslim women are doing in rebelling against the traditional Muslim family structure is to rebel against fourteen centuries of Islam itself although many may not be aware of the inner forces that drive them on. It is the patriarchal nature of Islam that makes the reaction of some modernized women today so vehement. Although very limited in number, they are, in fact, more than Muslim men, thirsting for all things Western. They seek to become modernized in their dress and habits with an impetuosity which would be difficult to understand unless one considers the deep psychological factors involved.

1. Sayyid Abul ‘Ala Maudoodi, *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam*, Islamic Publications, Lahore, 1972, pp. 52-53.

"From the Islamic point of view, the question of the equality of men and women is meaningless. It is like discussing the equality of a rose and a jasmine. Each has its own perfume, colour, shape and beauty. Men and women are not the same. Each has particular features and characteristics. Women are not equal to men. But neither are men equal to women. Islam envisages their roles in society not as competing but as complimentary. Each has certain duties and functions in accordance with his or her nature and constitution.

"Man possesses certain privileges such as social authority and mobility against which he has to perform many heavy duties. First of all, he bears all economic responsibility. It is his duty to support his family completely even if his wife is rich and despite the fact that she is economically independent. A woman in traditional Islamic society does not have to worry about earning a living. There is always the larger family structure in which she can find a place and take refuge from social and economic pressures even if she has no husband or father. In the extended family system, a man often supports not only his wife and children but also his mother, sister, aunts, inlaws and sometimes even cousins and more distant relatives. Therefore in city life, the necessity of having to find a job at all costs and having to bear the economic pressure of life is lifted from the shoulders of women. As for the countryside, the family is itself the economic unit and the work is achieved by the larger family or tribal unit together.

"Secondly, a woman does not have to find a husband for herself. She does not have to display her charms and make the thousand and one plans through which she hopes to attract a future mate. The terrible anxiety of having to find a husband and of missing the opportunity if one does not try hard enough at the right moment is spared the Muslim woman. Being able to remain true to her nature, she can afford to sit at home and wait for her parents or guardian to choose a suitable match. This usually leads to a marriage which, being based on the sense of religious duty and enduring family and social bonds between the two sides, is more lasting and ends much more rarely in divorce than the marriages which are based on the sentiments of the moment that often do not develop into more permanent relationship.

"Thirdly, the Muslim woman is spared direct military and political responsibility although in rare cases there have been women warriors. This point may appear as a deprivation to some but in the light of the real needs of feminine nature, it is easy to see that for most women, such duties weigh heavily upon them. Even in modern societies which through the equalitarian process have tried to equate men and women as if there were no difference in the two sexes, women are usually spared the military draft except in extreme circumstances.

"In return for these privileges which the woman receives, she has also certain responsibilities of which the most important is to provide a home for her family and to bring up her children properly. In the home the woman rules as queen and a Muslim man is in a sense the guest of his wife at home. The home and the larger family structure in which she lives are for the Muslim woman her world. To be cut off from it would be like being cut off from the world or like dying. She finds the meaning of her existence in this extended family structure which is constructed so as to give her the maximum possibility of realizing her basic needs and fulfilling herself.

"The Shariah therefore envisages the role of men and women according to their nature which is complimentary. It gives the man the privilege of social and political authority and movement for which he has to pay by bearing heavy responsibilities, by protecting his family from all the forces and pressures of society, economic and otherwise. Although a master in the world at large and the head of his own family, the man acts in his home as one who recognizes the rule of his wife in this domain and respects it. Through mutual understanding and the realization of the responsibilities that God has placed on each other's shoulders, the Muslim man and woman are able to fulfil their personalities and create a firm family unit which is the basic structure of Muslim society." <sup>1</sup>

In the vehement rejection of the cultural, moral and spiritual values, indispensable for maintaining the institution of the family, those who support the Women's Liberation Movement are revolting against the whole Christian heritage of their own civilization.

1. Syed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1966, pp. 110-113.

Despite the evils of its feudalistic society and the abuses of the authority of the priesthood, medieval Europe enjoyed a social integration, stability, peace and harmony which is unknown to modern Europe. Here is a vivid and moving description of Christian family values practically implemented in medieval Europe as taken from the family chronicles of the famous German artist, Albrecht Durer (1471-1528) who, although a devout Christian, presents a picture of his own home life as very close to Islamic ideals.

Albrecht Durer, my beloved father, came to Germany, and stayed for a long time in the low countries, working with the great masters and finally came here to Nuremberg in the year of Our Lord 1455 on St. Eligius's day. And on this same day (June 25<sup>th</sup>) there was the wedding of Philip Pircheimer in the castle and a great reception under the big lime tree. Thenceforth, for a long time, my beloved father, Albrecht Durer served the old Hiernonymus Holper until the year of our Lord 1467. Then he gave him his daughter Barbara, a handsome, virtuous maid, fifteen years of age and they were married eight days before St. Vitus (June 8).

This good mother of mine bore and brought up eighteen children, often had the pestilence and many other severe illnesses, endured great poverty, ridicule, scorn, alarm, and misfortune, yet she never bore revenge. These brothers and sisters of mine, my beloved father's children, are all dead, some died young, the rest when adult. Only we three brothers are still living, so long as it may please God; namely, I, Albrecht and my brother Andreas, likewise my brother Hans, the third of that name out of my father's children.

This said Albrecht Durer, the elder, worked hard all his life and had nothing else to live on but what he earned for himself, his wife and his children with his own hands. He also had all manner of grief, temptation and adversity. And all who knew him praised him for he led an honourable Christian life, was a patient and gentle man, peaceable towards everyone and he was very thankful to God. He had little use for society and worldly pleasures; he was also a man of few words and god fearing. My beloved father took great pains to teach his children to honour the Lord. For his greatest wish was to bring up his children well so that they would be pleasing in the sight of God and man. Therefore he continually told us to love God and behave honourably towards our fellow men. And my father was especially fond of me for he saw that I was eager to learn. Therefore he sent me to school and when I had learnt to read and write, he took me away from school and taught me the goldsmith's craft. And when I had mastered this, I felt that I would rather be a painter than a goldsmith. When I told my father this, he was not pleased for he grieved at the loss of time I had spent as his apprentice. But in the end, he let me have my way and in the year of our Lord 1486, on St. Andrew's day (30<sup>th</sup> November) my father bound me as apprentice to Micheal Wolgemut to serve him for three years. In that time God gave me diligence and I learnt well but I also had to suffer much at the hands of his assistants. And after I had come home, Hans Frey negotiated with my father and gave me his daughter, Agnes and with her gave me 200 florins and we were married on Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup> before St. Margaret's day in the year 1494.

Later it happened that my father became ill with dysentery and no one could cure him. And when he saw death approaching, he submitted to it calmly and patiently and commended my mother to my care and bade us to follow in the way of the Lord. He received the last sacraments and died a Christian death, leaving my mother a sorrowing widow. He had always praised her to me exceedingly as a most godly woman. Therefore I resolved never to forsake her. All my friends ! I ask you in God's name when you read of my pious father's death to say a Paternoster and an Ave Maria for his soul and for the sake of your souls too, that we may, by serving God, succeed in living a good life and dying a good death. For it is not possible that one who has led a good life should die an evil death for God is merciful.

Now you shall know that in the year 1513, on a Tuesday before Rogation, my poor mother—whom I had taken care of for nine years since she came to live with me two years after my father died when she was quite penniless—was taken so ill early in the morning that we had to break open her door—for she was too weak to let us in and that was the only way we could get to her. We brought her downstairs and she received both sacraments for everyone knew she was about to die. She had never been well since my father died. More than a year from the said day on which she fell ill, in the year of our Lord, May 17, 1514, two hours before dark, my pious mother, Barbara Durer departed from this life with all the sacraments, absolved from pain and sin by papal authority. Before she died, she gave me her blessing and wished me divine peace with much good advice to guard myself from sin. And she was most afraid of death but she said she was not afraid to meet God. Any my mother's death grieved me more than I can say. May God have mercy on her soul ! It .

was always her greatest pleasure to speak of God and see that we honoured Him. And it was her custom to go regularly to church and she always scolded me heavily when I did wrong. And she was always anxious lest I or my brothers should sin. And whenever I went out or came in, she would say, "God be with you!" And she constantly gave us solemn warning and had continual concern for our souls. And I cannot say enough about her good works and the kindness she showed to everybody or of her good name.

And it was in her sixty-third year when she died. And I buried her fittingly in accordance with my means. May the Lord grant me that I too die a Christian death and that I may join Him and His Heavenly Host, my father, my mother and my friends and may Almighty God give us eternal life! Amen. And in death she looked far sweeter than when she was still alive. \**The Durer in Nuremberg: Extracts from Durer's Family Chronicles and Reminiscences*, English translation by John M. Woolman, Nuremberg, n. d., pp.34-46.

A uni-sexual society be proposed be the feminists—that is, a society which makes no cultural or social distinction between the sexes, a society without marriage, home and family, where modesty, chastity and motherhood are scorned, does not represent "progress" or "liberation" but degradation at its worst. The result is pure and unadulterated anarchy, confusion and chaos.

If so, why is Feminism so popular?

The social order founded on materialism is the oldest and most popular. No social order is more satisfying, none so easy to evolve and so readily acceptable to the majority of men in all climes and at all times. It has such a deep attraction for the masses that its roots need not go deep into the soil nor is it necessary to raise the level of human intelligence or make any sacrifice for its sake. One requires no altruism or endurance. One need only drift with the "times." History bears witness to the fact that no social order has so persistently come to have its sway over humanity as it has done. \**Religion and Civilization*, Abul Hasan Ali Nadawi, Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Lucknow, 1970, p.45.

Never has moral corruption and social decadence menaced mankind on such a universal scale as is the case now. The adoption of feminist ideals degrades humans lower than the animals. For animals live by their instincts and cannot do anything opposed to their nature. Among animals, homosexuality is unknown. The male is only attracted to the female of its own species. The male animals never go with lust to another male or a female to another female. Among animals, the maternal relationship is completely severed as soon as the young are able to look after themselves. In most species, the father takes no interest in its offspring. There is no such thing as modesty, chastity, marriage or filial ties among beasts. These concepts are unique with human beings. They are found in every human culture at every stage of civilization and history. The feminists wish to abolish the very characteristics which make man human and undermine the foundation of all his relationships and social ties. The result will be suicide, not only of a single nation as in the past, but of the entire human race.

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